

THE MILITANT

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UN vote condemns U.S. embargo against Cuba

BY SARA LOBMAN

UNITED NATIONS — For the second time in a year the United Nations General Assembly voted overwhelmingly November 3 to condemn the U.S. trade embargo against Cuba. Only the delegates of Albania, Paraguay, and Israel joined the government of the United States in opposing the resolution.

"Reaffirming, among other principles, the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and freedom of trade and international navigation," the resolution calls on all governments to cease applying legislation that restricts trade with Cuba and take steps to "repeal or invalidate" any such laws currently on the books.

The resolution singles out for special condemnation any "laws and regulations whose extraterritorial effects affect the sovereignty of other States and the legitimate interests of entities or persons under their jurisdiction, as well as the freedom of trade and navigation."

Washington has long used its economic, political, and military muscle to pressure other governments to break relations with Cuba. The Cuban Democracy Act, or Torricelli bill, which was signed into U.S. law in late 1992, explicitly forbids foreign subsidiaries of U.S. firms from trading with

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After the UN General Assembly voted to condemn Washington's embargo against Cuba, opponents of the U.S. trade ban held a news conference to announce solidarity activities. Speakers included (from left) Lucius Walker of Pastors for Peace, attorneys Michael Krinsky and William Kunstler, and Andrés Gómez of the Antonio Maceo Brigade.

Striking miners indicted on frame-up charges in death of nonunion worker



Miners staff picket shack at Ruffner mine in Yolyn, West Virginia, in June. The government is attempting to pin blame on UMWA strikers in the killing of a nonunion contract worker at that portal.

BY BERNIE SENTER

MORGANTOWN, West Virginia — Eight striking members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) were indicted on conspiracy charges stemming from the July 22 shooting death of Eddie York outside Arch Mineral Corp.'s Ruffner mine in Yolyn, West Virginia.

York was shot in the back of the head as he left the mine in a four-car convoy. He was employed by Deskins Contracting, which was hired by Arch Mineral to clean out a sediment pond at the mine. Management personnel have been operating the mine since the beginning of the strike.

Roughly 18,000 UMWA members are on strike in seven states.

The four-count indictment was handed down November 2 by a federal grand jury in Charleston, West Virginia, following an investigation by the state police, FBI, and the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms.

The eight miners, all members of UMWA Local 5958, are charged with conspiracy to attack the convoy with rocks, slingshots, firearms, and Molotov cocktails. Jerry Lowe was charged with illegal use of firearms. He faces 50 years in prison and a \$1 million fine if convicted. The other miners could be sentenced to 25 years in jail and \$500,000 in fines.

The grand jury did not indict the miners for York's slaying, but for allegedly violating federal laws that prohibit interfering with transportation involved in interstate commerce.

UMWA Local 5958 president Ernie Woods was among those indicted. At a Labor Day rally in Boone County he told the *Militant*, "I'm not afraid of justice but I am afraid of a frame-up."

An official from UMWA District 17 said, "Naturally, the union is going to defend the miners."

Miners at the Ruffner picket line have pointed to a systematic pattern of violence by the coal operators and their security guards. On a number of occasions guards fired weapons in the air at the same picket site where York was killed. A few weeks prior to the shooting, security guards raided the picket shack, destroying radios, scanners, and other equipment.

The coal operators and the government have used the shooting as a pretext to witch-hunt the UMWA. U.S. senator Orrin Hatch of Utah stated that York's death was an example of how "violence is often threatened and executed as a negotiating tool by some unions."

Howard Green, a UMWA International Executive Board member from District 17, told a Charleston television station that the indictment and U.S. district judge Dennis Knapp's order limiting picket activity "makes it very difficult to negotiate and certainly I think it's a setback." Negotiations between the UMWA and the Bituminous Coal Operators Association resumed November 3.

"The entire investigation was bungled from the start," another UMWA official said in an interview. "I arrived

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Haiti military blocks return of Aristide

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The failure of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to return to Haiti on October 30, as promised by a UN-brokered accord, has left many Haitians deeply disappointed and wondering what will happen next. It has also spurred groups of rightist forces in close collaboration with Haiti's military rulers to escalate their reign of terror against Haitian working people in an effort to tighten their bloody grip on the country.

Speaking to the United Nations General Assembly October 28, Aristide called for "a total and complete blockade" of Haiti to force army chief Raoul Cédras to give up power and leave the country. Cédras led the September 1991 coup that ousted Aristide.

Recognizing that his return to Haiti was not imminent, Aristide insisted that the October 30 date set for his arrival in Haiti "is not a choice of returning or not returning" but a choice between "departure and lateness." The Haitian president insisted the agreement he and Cédras signed last July at New York's Governors Island "will always be viable."

As Aristide was speaking in New York, a group of 28 Haitian refugees, seized by the U.S. Coast Guard in international waters, were being forcibly returned to Port-au-Prince. This was the second boatload of Haitians that U.S. authorities handed back to the military police in a two-day period.

"The U.S. government is returning them to certain death," stated Rolande Dorancy, a leading Haitian activist in Miami. Clinton has vowed to continue this policy despite intensified military repression.

A navy amphibious assault ship with
Continued on Page 3

Rightist thugs kill workers in N. Ireland

BY MARCELLA FITZERALD

LONDON — Right-wing gunmen killed 7 people and injured 10 in a bar in Greysteel, Northern Ireland, October 30. Six of the dead were Catholic and one Protestant. At the funerals three days later, two Catholic friends carried the coffin of the Protestant, John Burns. The murders brought to 24 the

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number killed over the previous 10 days.

Following an Irish Republican Army (IRA) bomb explosion October 23 that killed nine in the mostly Protestant Shankill Road district of Belfast, Unionist (pro-British) politicians Ian Paisley and Ken Maginnis said that there would be atrocities from supporters of British rule in Northern Ireland. Retaliation began that night when the houses of a Catholic family and a mixed family were firebombed in Lisburn, near Belfast.

In the following days, six Catholic workers were randomly murdered. On October 26, members of a right-wing death squad shot two workmen dead and injured five others. The workers were planning to attend a meeting later that day to show their respect for those who were killed in the IRA bombing.

The violence has been concentrated in working-class neighborhoods.

Thousands gathered at funerals following
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IN BRIEF

VW threatens to cut 30,000 jobs

Volkswagen A.G. told production workers at six plants in western Germany to accept a shorter workweek and wage cuts or 30,000 workers would be laid off. Europe's largest auto maker threatened employees with a four-day workweek of 28.8 hours at an unspecified reduction in pay to confront sagging profits worsened by a deep recession. The unionists currently work a five-day 36-hour week. The company will negotiate the plan with the IG Metall union, which organizes its 108,000 work force.

Workers strike in Italy

Thousands of workers in Italy's major cities demonstrated October 28 as part of a four-hour general strike to protest rising unemployment and low pay. Wages in Italy are lagging behind inflation while unemployment stands at 11 percent. The strike followed a week of labor unrest by transportation workers. Chemical workers observed an all-day work stoppage. In September, the government was forced to make concessions to chemical workers who occupied a plant in southern Italy, where unemployment has reached 40 percent.

Athens recalls envoy

The Greek government has recalled its ambassador to Tirana, Albania, following the death of an elderly Greek woman at the hands of the Albanian police. The Albanian government rejected a protest note from Athens, saying the woman died of natural causes. Villagers claim police arrived as a result of clashes that broke out as Albanian refugees took over land belonging to the ethnic Greek minority.

U.S. troops raze Somali homes

U.S. troops in Somalia bulldozed over 11 homes filled with the personal belongings of residents to clear the way for a road connecting the airport to Mogadishu's port. Washington destroyed the houses to avoid building the road through residential areas of the city where UN forces have encountered resistance to the occupation. The 50 displaced Somalis were given new shacks to live in, but these lack windows and thus retain the heat that climbs past 100 degrees every day, and have no doors or no interior walls. The residents also lost the title deeds which prove they own the houses and land.

Meanwhile, 2,000 supporters of Gen. Mohamed Farah Aidid protested October 31 against the UN's military intervention in Somalia.

Cops attack Kashmir protests

Indian police forces fired on tens of thousands of demonstrators in Srinagar and neighboring towns in the state of Kashmir October 22. An estimated 47 people were killed and many more injured while protesting against the siege of a mosque by Indian troops since October 15. About 35,000 Indian troops are stationed in Srinagar, including 10,000 surrounding the mosque, which is occupied by Kashmir independence fighters. The area has been engulfed by a rebellion for independence from India for more than three years.

Japan in recession

The Japanese economy seems to be headed for its worst recession since World War II. Government officials predict the current downturn will continue into next spring. Nissan Motor Co., Japan Airlines Co., and Nikon Corp. have reported losses up to \$267 million for the first half of the fiscal year. "Companies aren't slashing costs and payrolls fast enough to reverse their earnings slide," the November 1 *Wall Street Journal* reported. Tetsuo Tsukimura of Smith Barney Shearson Inc. predicts that Japanese firms may shed a million jobs in the coming years, bringing record high unemployment levels.

Guyana to legalize some abortions

Guyana's health minister Gail Texeira said the South American country is moving to legalize abortion under certain conditions. The procedure would be decriminalized in cases of rape, incest, threat to the mother's life, and financial hardship. "Our overriding concern," said Texeira, is "to stop the crimi-



Workers in Rome, Italy, protesting unemployment and government's austerity plan October 28.

nal acts that have made septic abortion the third highest cause of admissions in our state-run hospitals."

Salvadoran death squads strike

Two leaders of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) and a couple believed to be former FMLN combatants were murdered by right-wing death squads in late October. The UN mission in El Salvador, which has been monitoring compliance with the accords that ended the civil war in 1992, said an additional 12 killings this year were almost certainly committed by death squads for political reasons. One of the victims, shot on a busy street in broad daylight, was an FMLN candidate for the National Assembly in upcoming elections scheduled for March 1994.

U.S. discourages Cuba investment

Washington sent a cable titled "Buyers Beware" to all U.S. embassies and consultates that "strongly urges" them to dissuade international investment in Cuban properties nationalized in the early years of the Cuban revolution. This is the second U.S. warning since 1991. Havana has been seeking foreign investments to counter the difficulties caused by the loss of trade from the former Soviet Union and the U.S. embargo.

Including interest, the White House claims the Cuban government owes Washington about \$5 billion for assets expropriated more than 30 years ago. Cuban officials have settled claims made by Spanish, Canadian, British, French, and Swiss firms. Havana is ready to negotiate U.S. claims if they are balanced against Cuban claims of \$40 billion in economic damage caused by the

U.S. government's trade embargo.

Judge orders prisoner's release

A federal judge in Los Angeles ruled that the indefinite detention in federal prison of a Cuban who arrived on the Mariel boat lift is unconstitutional, and ordered his release. Alexis Barrera-Echavarria has never been convicted of a federal offense. He has already served his time for previous criminal convictions, and faces no other charges. The U.S. government has been unable to deport him so they have kept him in federal prison.

Court allows Pentagon's gay policy

At the urging of the Clinton administration, the U.S. Supreme Court granted a stay against a Federal judge's order to ban all types of discrimination against gays in the military. The Court's decision allows the continued dismissal of gays from the armed forces. This ruling clears the way for the implementation of Clinton's "don't ask, don't tell, don't pursue" policy against gays in the military. It had been scheduled to take effect October 1. Under current White House guidelines gays can be in the military as long as they keep their sexual preference a secret.

No raise in U.S. minimum wage

U.S. labor secretary Robert Reich recommended that President Bill Clinton wait until next year to seek an increase in the minimum wage. Earlier, Reich had announced he was prepared to recommend that the White House raise the minimum wage to \$4.75 an hour from \$4.25. In his election campaign, Clinton had promised to raise the minimum wage and index it to account for increases in inflation.

— PAT SMITH

THE MILITANT

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Thousands in Australia protest austerity

BY LINDA HARRIS
AND PAUL GREY

MELBOURNE, Australia — Coinciding with a 24-hour strike by teachers October 6, thousands took to the streets here to protest attacks on workers' rights and standard of living by the Victorian state government led by Jeff Kennett. The demonstration was called by the Victorian Trades Hall Council. Union officials estimated that 30–40,000 people attended the lunchtime march. Other actions took place in five towns around Victoria.

The demonstration was a central part of a weeklong "spring offensive" called by the union to protest broad ranging attacks on jobs, working conditions, and benefits won by working people in struggle.

Since coming to office just over a year ago, the Liberal Party government has abolished all statewide awards (contracts) that govern wages and working conditions and has forced workers to sign plantwide agreements with employers. The government closed 55 schools and announced plans to shut another 100. It also introduced new restrictions on workers' rights to claim compensation for on-the-job injuries. This assault includes cutting penalty (overtime) rates, outlawing strike action for the duration of any state contract or enterprise agreement, and restrictions on the number of workers on picket lines.

While the attacks on workers' rights in Victoria deepen, the federally elected Labor Party government is continuing to negotiate with the Australian Council of Trade Unions to impose cuts in the federal award system and incorporate this into agreements with single enterprises as well.



Militant/Paul Grey
Participants in the October 6 demonstration in Melbourne from Australia Asia workers conference. Delegates came from Japan, New Zealand, Malaysia, Korea, and Thailand.

The October 6 demonstration was the fourth mass action called by the Trades Hall in the past year and the smallest. Following the march, Trades Hall secretary John Halfpenny announced that "for the time being those sort of mass rallies have probably run their race." Despite moves by union officials to scale down protests, school occupations are continuing at the Richmond, Fitzroy, and

Northlands schools, which were slated for closure last November.

Northlands has the largest number of Aboriginal students of any school in Victoria, and a well established Aboriginal cultural program. The government proposed to transfer this program to Thornbury, a nearby school. But Dedrie Bux, the Aboriginal Educator at Northlands, said in an interview

that, the Aboriginal program had been developed with the involvement and support of students, teachers, and parents and could not simply be transferred to another school where such links between the school and the Aboriginal community did not exist. In addition, Thornbury school is not as accessible by public transport, which makes it more difficult for the Aboriginal students who come from across Melbourne to attend.

A new shopping mall has just been constructed opposite the school that developers want to expand. Construction plans have raised the value of the land where the school is located. Under the previous Labor Party government the school had been starved for funds. The Liberal government now argues that it is too costly to maintain. In the first month of the occupation a campaign was launched to keep the school open, but this was rejected by the government.

Alleging discrimination in the decision to close the school, activists are presenting their case before the Equal Opportunity Board. They think they have a good chance of winning.

Teachers transferred from Northlands to different schools around Victoria continue to support the occupation and participate when they can. Suzie Brown, one of the parents leading the occupation, said that the action showed how others can fight. "It's an example of resistance, of what people can do and what they will have to do," she stated.

Linda Harris is a member of the Automotive, Metal and Engineering Union at Hoovers in Sydney, Australia.

Iceland union fights political firing in shipyard

BY MARGRET EINARSDÓTTIR

REYKJAVIK, Iceland — The trade union Dagsbrún (Dawn) has filed a case in Labor Court here against the management of the Stálsmidjan shipyard over the firing of a worker who actively supported the union in a recent conflict between workers and the company on the organization of overtime work. Dagsbrún officials report the firing violates labor legislation. Members of Dagsbrún say they have heard of other "political firings" where nothing has been done because they are difficult to prove.

There has been no peace since new owners took over the shipyard in 1989, says Árni H. Kristjánsson, the elected shop steward. The conflict around overtime began just after the new management came in.

When Stálsmidjan took over from Slippfélagid, workers were covered under an agreement that included working five hours of overtime a week. The new owners stated they would keep promises to the workers and honor the existing contract.

The company, however, invalidated the agreement last year, an action deemed unlawful by the Labor Court. Stálsmidjan wanted to reorganize overtime; workers demanded they stick to the contract.

The court ruling only helped the workers for a short time. The conflict doesn't seem to have an end. In mid-October the Labor Court declared the action workers took to defend themselves during the fight unlawful.

Just a few days earlier, the Federation of Labor had filed a court case on behalf of Dagsbrún against the Central Organization of Employers, which represents Stálsmidjan, protesting the firing of Gylfi Páll Hersir, a worker in the shipyard who has been actively involved in the recent dispute.

"We will emphasize getting an agreement with the company to withdraw the firing," said lawyer Atli Gislaðson, who represents the union.

As soon as the shop steward heard about the firing, he told Stálsmidjan management he saw it as a violation of labor legislation that says employers, foremen, and others who act on behalf of the company must not try to influence the views or union activities of workers by firings or threats of dismissal.

The company and the Central Organization of Employers claim the firing is a lawful layoff — the company is rationalizing production and has laid off six others. Dagsbrún members do not accept these arguments, pointing out that Gylfi Páll is the only worker in their department laid off. In other

departments there were concrete reasons for the dismissals — some of those workers are over 67 years old, others were hired on a temporary basis.

The department employed 18–20 workers a decade ago, but only 11 work there today, which is too few. These job cuts were not due to lack of work. Currently, foremen are carrying out work that unionists usually do, in violation of the contract agreement on work norms.

Union members also point out that there is no group layoff taking place. If there were, the Ministry of Labor should have been notified.

Even if layoffs were scheduled, Gylfi Páll was not first in line to lose his job. At least two workers have less seniority, and one worker was rehired the same time as the

firing. Gylfi also has a good work record.

Skúli Jónsson, director of Stálsmidjan, said in a Channel 2 radio interview that the shop steward had been consulted about Gylfi's layoff. The shop steward firmly denies this.

"This only makes me suspicious," Árni Kristjánsson said. He explained that the director called him into the office September 29 and told him a temporary worker would not be rehired. Árni protested against this treatment of the worker, who was seriously injured recently in an accident on the job due to company negligence in safety. The next day the director again called him into the office to say he would keep the worker but fire Gylfi Páll instead.

Officials in the Dagsbrún office say "po-

litical firings" come up now and then. They are not taken to court because it is difficult to establish proof. As a matter of fact, employers can legally fire any worker with certain notice, just as any worker can quit the job when they like.

In times of recession, as we are living through, this is easier for the employers. Now they can more easily get rid of "unwanted" employees on the pretext of rationalizing production or carrying out group layoffs. Whatever the reason, it is a serious problem for those who lose the job.

This article is excerpted from one published in the Oct. 15, 1993, issue of *Vikubladid* [The Weekly Newspaper] published in Reykjavík. Translation is by the Militant.

Haitian military blocks return of Aristide

Continued from front page

about 650 Marines aboard was recently added to the 1,900 sailors on board six U.S. warships currently surrounding Haiti. The governments of Britain, France, and Canada have also sent warships to join this armada. Claiming it is enforcing a UN-sanctioned oil and arms embargo against Haiti, this military force in its first 10 days of operation has boarded and searched more than 25 ships, forcing at least 10 to turn back.

According to a report in the *Christian Science Monitor*, the economic sanctions, which were reimposed on Haiti by the UN Security Council October 16, will not be lifted until the military regime allows the return of UN troops that left the country in mid-October. Under the terms of the Governors Island accord, the UN was to send a force of 1,300 soldiers to the Caribbean island, including 600 from the United States, to "retrain" the Haitian military and police.

The government of France is backing Aristide's call for a total blockade of the island. Washington has opted for continuing to maintain military enforcement of the current arms and oil embargo while freezing the overseas assets of some 40 Haitian military leaders and their supporters.

The Cuban government has condemned Washington's military buildup in the Caribbean. The Caribbean Congress of Labor,

representing an alliance of unions in the area, has stated its opposition to armed intervention in Haiti. Foreign ministers of Mexico, Venezuela, and the Dominican Republic, while expressing support for an embargo against Haiti, have expressed opposition to a U.S. invasion.

Haiti military leaders on CIA payroll

Meanwhile, U.S. officials publicly admitted at the end of October that central leaders of Haiti's military have been on the payroll of the Central Intelligence Agency from the mid-1980s at least until the 1991 coup. The agency also planned to intervene in a January 1988 election by slipping campaign money to some of the candidates.

This revelation comes shortly after a CIA briefing to Congress that slandered Aristide as being mentally unstable. However, further inquiry into the facts proved the CIA's claim that Aristide was on lithium and other medication to be a hoax. The "evidence" came from a doctor who does not exist. In addition, Aristide was in Israel at the time, not Canada as the agency reported.

With Aristide's return stymied, U.S. secretary of state Warren Christopher urged the formation of an interim regime in Haiti. Washington has also been applying pressure on Aristide to "broaden out" his government to include more rightist forces and those from pro-military parties.

In Port-au-Prince, Haiti's capital, 200 supporters of right-wing groups took to the streets October 30 to celebrate the failure of Aristide to return. The following day a group of small political parties linked to Haiti's military rulers called for an interim government and new presidential elections to replace Aristide.

Under this plan the president of the Supreme Court, Emile Jonassaint, would head the provisional government, with new elections to follow within 90 days. Jonassaint is a strong supporter of the military who was fired by Aristide but has refused to leave his post.

UN special envoy Dante Caputo has been seeking, to no avail, new talks with the military to discuss a revised timetable for Aristide's return.

French priest Gilles Danroc, who works in St. Marc, Haiti, aptly described to *Miami Herald* reporter Tim Johnson the potentially explosive situation in place in many rural Haitian towns.

"In Verettes, a town of 10,000 people, no more than 200 people control all commerce, transportation, government jobs and loan sharking," Danroc said. The rest are at their mercy," writes Johnson. "Even as the elite in the town support and organize the repression they are frightened themselves that the day is nearing when the downtrodden will exact revenge."

Clinton 'health plan' won't solve medical crisis facing millions

BY SARA LOBMAN

On October 27, President Bill Clinton submitted a proposed "Health Security Act" to the U.S. Congress. The plan, which Clinton claims will ensure "comprehensive health care security for all Americans," is expected to be debated in Congress for at least a year. Clinton now says the bill, if adopted, will take effect in 1998.

As more and more facts come out about the proposed legislation, one thing is already certain: the Clinton health plan will do little, if anything, to resolve the massive health-care crisis confronting working people in the United States.

Clinton, his wife Hillary, who is the White House chief adviser on health care, and other administration officials, have been working overtime to sell their plan. "Security means that every American . . . regardless of residence or race or station, will be guaranteed health security," Hillary Clinton said at a day-long forum on health care in Kansas City, Missouri, two days after the bill was presented to Congress.

But in spite of her assurances, the Clinton proposal is not primarily a health plan. It is first and foremost a plan to cut social services, gut Medicaid and Medicare, attack the rights of immigrant workers, and, as Hillary Clinton pointed out in a speech last August, convince working people that "there can't be any more free health care to which people feel they are entitled."

Budget director Leon Panetta reported that the president did not want to create "open-ended entitlements" in health care, "particularly when we're trying to discipline

the rest of government spending." Clinton predicts his proposal will shave \$58 billion from the federal deficit.

U.S. secretary of health and human services Donna Shalala acknowledges that 40 percent of those eligible for insurance — about 100 million people — will pay higher premiums under the so-called health reform bill than they currently do. "We are going to have to persuade them they are getting higher benefits, or that it is their civic duty," Senator Daniel Moynihan said in response to Shalala's announcement.

Health care crisis

There is clearly a health care crisis in the United States. According to government statistics, more than 37 million people in the United States are not covered by any kind of medical insurance. In fact, the numbers are probably much higher. An article in the September 21 *Washington Post* noted that health care experts estimate that somewhere between 48 million and 58 million people lack medical coverage at some point during any given year. An additional 20 million are considered underinsured.

Working people are hit the hardest by this crisis. A third of all those with an annual income below \$21,000 have no insurance. A recent government study reported that individuals with family incomes below \$9,000 a year had a death rate three to seven times higher than those with incomes of \$25,000 or more. Less than 60 percent of preschool children get the vaccines routinely recommended by doctors and the incidence of tuberculosis



Protesters from ACT-UP, a group that advocates rights for people with AIDS, demand health coverage for all. Immigrant rights groups have also assailed Clinton's proposals. Hillary Clinton's message to working people is: "There can't be any more free health care to which people feel they are entitled."

among children has increased 35 percent in recent years.

President Clinton brags that his plan will guarantee "Americans" a right to "health security — health care that can never be taken away, health care that is always there." But what is the truth?

'Universal' health care?

The "Health Security Act" explicitly bars undocumented immigrant workers from receiving health care under the Clinton plan. "An undocumented alien is not eligible to obtain the comprehensive benefit package," the proposal emphasizes. A health security card will ensure that ineligible individuals do not receive treatment by mistake.

According to the Clinton scheme, "universal" coverage would be achieved by requiring both employers and workers to contribute toward a medical policy. The company would be required to pay 80 percent of the cost of a so-called standard plan, while the worker would be responsible for 20 percent. The cost and content of the various plans would be negotiated between the insurance companies and regional alliances that Clinton claims will represent the interests of health-care "consumers."

In response to the outcry from many small business people, who argue that they simply don't have the resources to cover insurance premiums for all their employees, Clinton's bill places a cap of 7.9 percent of payroll on the amount any company with more than 75 workers would be required to pay. Employers, Clinton says, will not have to pay more than 3.9 percent of their wages.

While Clinton says the federal government would cover any difference between the cost of the coverage and the employer and worker contribution, the plan places a cap on the amount the government can spend overall on subsidies. It's unclear what would happen if this cap were exceeded. According to the *Washington Post*, however, if Congress didn't release additional funds, either insurance premiums would need to be increased or some individuals would not receive coverage.

Plan blames individuals for crisis

The heart of the Clinton plan is to blame individual working people who cannot afford insurance for the health care crisis. "The problem today," Hillary Clinton told the Kansas City meeting, is that "too many pay nothing."

"All individuals should have a responsibility to pay their fair share of the costs of health care coverage," the proposed bill states.

Under a section titled "Individual responsibilities," the administration spells out even more clearly what this means.

"In accordance with the Act," the proposal reads, "each eligible individual . . . (1) must enroll in an applicable health plan . . . and (2) must pay any premium required." The Health Security Act would make it illegal for an individual to withdraw from a particular health plan until they enrolled in another approved plan or became eligible for Medicare.

"If you lose your job, you're covered," Clinton promised when he presented his pro-

posal to Congress. "If you move, you're covered. If you leave your job to start a small business, you're covered."

But what Clinton doesn't explain is that, while forcing every individual to purchase insurance, the health plan makes no provisions for how an unemployed worker is supposed to pick up the tab — not just for 20 percent of the cost, but the 80 percent the boss would have previously paid. Only in cases where a worker's income dipped below 150 percent of the poverty level, about \$20,900 a year, would any kind of federal aid kick in. White House officials estimate that an average premium will be \$4,360 a year for a two-parent family with children and nearly \$2,000 for an individual.

Farmers and other self-employed workers would be required to pay the entire cost of their coverage.

The administration proposal takes special aim at young people. "We're going to tell individuals who think they can get by without coverage because they're 25 and believe they're immortal, that when they have that terrible accident or unpredicted illness and end up in the emergency room . . . and stick us with the bill, that we're not going to let that go on any longer," Hillary Clinton said in June. Officials estimate that more than a third of those whose premiums will increase under the proposed plan will be youth.

Several groups and individuals have responded with reactionary attacks on the elderly. In the October 3 *New York Post*, Jonathan Karl said the Clinton plan "will provide a short-term windfall for older Americans by hammering the youngest segment of the population." Karl is a cofounder of a group called Third Millennium.

'Security Act' guts Medicaid, Medicare

While promising not to make medical care a right to which working people feel entitled, the Clinton plan will gut Medicaid and Medicare — programs that guarantee medical coverage to low-income families and the elderly. In fact, almost half the funding for the administration's plan will come from cuts in these basic entitlement programs.

The "Health Security Act" would raise premiums for Medicare recipients by \$11 a month. In addition, the health proposal will institute means-testing for Medicare. Whereas now all recipients pay for 25 percent of coverage, the Clinton health plan will require anyone with an income more than \$100,000 to pay 75 percent.

Clinton claims another 10 percent of the funding for his plan would come from cuts in other government programs, and more than 20 percent from taxes on cigarettes, cigars, and other tobacco products. The federal tax on a pack of cigarettes — referred to often by government officials as a "sin tax" — would go from 24 cents to 99 cents. Taxes on chewing tobacco would jump from 3 cents to 96 cents.

With typical arrogance, White House officials say the large increase in the tax on chewing tobacco is to prevent young people from turning to smokeless tobacco to avoid the high tax on cigarettes.



PATHFINDER AROUND THE WORLD

BY MAGGIE PUCCI

Pathfinder, located in New York with distributors in Australia, Britain, and Canada, publishes the works of working-class and communist leaders who have made central contributions to the forward march of humanity against exploitation and oppression. Pathfinder bookstores are listed in the directory on page 12.

Pathfinder will be reprinting the booklet *Fascism: What It Is and How To Fight It* by Leon Trotsky in November. Nearly 600 copies of this title have been sold so far this year, leaving the publisher temporarily out of stock.

Sales figures for all of Pathfinder's titles about the rise of fascism are up this year.

The Struggle against Fascism in Germany, also by Leon Trotsky, has sold 207 copies so far this year, compared with 72 for all of 1992. Three hundred ninety-five copies of *Fascism and Big Business*, by Daniel Guerin, have been sold in 1993. A total of 195 copies of this title were sold in 1992.

Distributors of Pathfinder books in England recently ordered 500 copies of *Fascism: What It Is and How To Fight It*. "Needless to say," writes Alan Harris, who heads up the distribution effort there, "this pamphlet is much required because it ties into the race question, and many people are protesting racist attacks on immigrants."

* * *

Several Pathfinder bookstores report very high sales figures for the months of August and September. Twin Cities, Minnesota, recorded \$1,197 in August sales. More than \$800 of this was from the special Pathfinder Readers Club offer for works by Marx and Engels. September was also a good month for the Twin Cities bookstore, with \$884 in sales.

The Boston Pathfinder Bookstore had

an excellent month in September with \$1,268 in sales, as well as signing up one new member and five renewals to the Pathfinder Readers Club. Bookstore walk-in sales there came to \$764 while \$489 worth of books were sold off literature tables.

The Greensboro, North Carolina, bookstore reports \$1,029 in sales and one new member for the Pathfinder Readers Club in September.

* * *

Pathfinder has begun to receive a steady stream of college course text orders for the spring 1994 semester. Professors at Duquesne University in Pennsylvania, and Stanford University and Saint Mary's College in California have adopted *The Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels as required reading for their classes. These orders add up to about 275 copies.

A professor at the University of Texas at El Paso ordered *Women and the Cuban Revolution* for his course "Studies in Latin American History." From Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts, an order was placed for *Socialism and Man in Cuba* by Che Guevara.

What is Surrealism? by André Breton has been adopted as required reading for the course "Arts and Humanities," which is part of the university Honors Program at the University of South Florida.

Pathfinder's titles by Malcolm X are also popular as college course texts. *Malcolm X: The Last Speeches* has been adopted for the class "America in the Sixties" at the University of Redlands in California, for the course "Black Political and Social Thought" at the College of the Holy Cross in Massachusetts, and at Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan. *Malcolm X on Afro-American History* is being used as part of the "African-American Culture I" class at the College of San Mateo in California.

Yeltsin acts to privatize Russian farmland

BY GREG ROSENBERG

Fresh from defeating a gang of rival bureaucrats in the now-defunct parliament, Russian president Boris Yeltsin signed a decree October 27 allowing the buying and selling of land. In doing so he eliminated legal obstacles to the restructuring of Russia's agricultural lands, while more fundamental hurdles remain.

London's *Financial Times* claimed the move was "likely to unleash a revolution in the Russian countryside and lead to

NEWS ANALYSIS

large foreign investment." The *Washington Post*, echoing a tune sung by most of the big-business press, said the decree would mean "undoing the bloody Bolshevik legacy of collectivization of agriculture."

Yeltsin's decree, however, does not mark a revolution whatsoever. It is the latest in a series of steps designed to pave the way toward Russia's integration into the world capitalist market system while placing the burden on the backs of workers and farmers.

Unlike what the *Post* claims, the forced collectivization of agriculture in the former Soviet Union had nothing to do with the policies of the Bolsheviks under the leadership of V.I. Lenin. Rather, the disasters inflicted on the toilers of the countryside were implemented by the petty-bourgeois bureaucracy headed by Joseph Stalin beginning in the late 1920s.

Stalin's policies turned the Communist Party from a revolutionary instrument in the hands of the workers to a tool of repression for the privileged ruling caste and destroyed the alliance of urban toilers and peasants the Bolsheviks built in the first years of the revolution.



J. Humbert-Droz Archives, City Library, La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland

Peasant women's conference in Russia in 1920. The Bolsheviks under V.I. Lenin strove to deepen the alliance of the working class and peasants that was crucial in the success of the October 1917 Russian revolution. Stalin's "forced collectivization" of the peasantry destroyed that alliance and did lasting damage to agriculture in the Soviet Union for decades to come. Yeltsin's decree will intensify problems of Russian farmers and agricultural workers.

The high percentage of nationalized land in Russia today underscores the difficulties posed in the attempt to reestablish capitalism there. There is widespread opposition among rural toilers to turning land into a commodity.

The economic havoc in Russia, where today two out of five people live below the official poverty line, promises no let up. Under the impact of Yeltsin's austerity moves, bread prices jumped from 36 rubles a loaf in August to 150 rubles in October.

Despite measures to privatize agriculture in 1990 and 1991, state and collective farms account for 92 percent of farmlands in Russia. Some 30 million people live on these lands. Since 1991, 184,000 private farmers took control of about 4 percent of registered farmland.

The text of Yeltsin's decree was not immediately available. The October 28 *New York Times*, however, reported that it "is part of a larger farm reform program that would

grant all dependents of state and collective farms shares they could take as land or trade, sell, mortgage or bequeath."

Reports indicate the decree would allow foreign capitalists to buy land through joint ventures with Russian partners.

The October 27 *Wall Street Journal* reported on a pilot program in the town of Buturino that Yeltsin is showcasing as a "step toward decollectivizing Russian agriculture."

In this program, certificates granting shares in the land and equipment of the farm are handed out to farm workers and pensioners.

"It starts with a series of upbeat speeches by the governor and other officials on how each farmer will be able to choose for himself what to do with his life and property," said the *Journal*. "But it quickly turns into a shouting match."

"You say you're not trying to force us into anything," said one woman, "but if we want to stay working in a collective, what do we need this certificate for?"

Bolsheviks and worker-peasant alliance

From the outset of the Russian revolution in 1917, the communist party, popularly known as the Bolsheviks, fought to strengthen the alliance of exploited producers — the working class and peasantry — in the Soviet Union.

On the first day of the revolution, the Soviet government declared that the holdings of big landowners would be turned over to the peasants. Until 1917, some 20 million peasant families in tsarist Russia scraped out a meager living on an average allotment of less than 19 acres for each family. In contrast, 30,000 rich landowners each held an average of 6,300 acres. Altogether they held as much land as 10 million peasant families.

Primary responsibility for the redistribution of such holdings was assigned by the revolutionary government to the soviets (councils) of poor peasants. To encourage increased agricultural production, the government provided aid in the form of implements, fertilizer, and other necessities.

Some state farms were established as models on a voluntary basis and were operated by soviets of farm workers. Lenin held that only by winning the small peasants through persuasion and example could collective farming and agricultural cooperatives succeed, expand, and advance production.

"Our decrees on peasant farming are in the main correct," Lenin told the Eighth Congress of the Russian Communist Party in 1919. "But if the decrees are right, it is wrong to impose them on the peasants by force. That is not contained in a single decree."

"We are pupils of the peasants," said Lenin, "and not their teachers. Nothing is more stupid than people who know nothing about farming and its specific features, rushing to the village only because they have heard of the advantages of socialized farming." Lenin insisted, "The aim is not to expropriate the middle peasant but to bear in mind the specific condition in which the peasant lives, to learn from him methods of

Continued on Page 12

Ukraine parliament reopens Chernobyl

BY JON HILLSON

For an unknown sum, the Ukraine parliament exchanged its soul October 21, voting overwhelmingly to nullify a 1991 decision to close the functioning remains of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in Prypiat. The shutdown had been scheduled for the end of this year.

In the 221-38 vote, legislators also overturned a 1990 ban on additional construction of atomic power facilities in the country.

"We cannot reject the development of nuclear power in Ukraine at the moment," the country's president, Leonid Kravchuk, told parliament.

"We were forced to pass such a resolution," stated Volodymyr Duntau, a legislator. "We have no other option than to use atomic energy."

This was an apparent reference to the financial squeeze put on the government of Ukraine by Moscow, its chief supplier of gas and oil. Kiev owes \$2.5 billion in energy debts to Russian banks.

Russia's rulers continue to raise prices for its gas and oil exports, deepening the economic crisis in several former Soviet republics, including Ukraine.

Among those opposing the pronuclear decision was Hanna Tsvitkova, a Greenpeace activist based in Kiev. "Chernobyl is Ukraine's ecological tragedy," she stated.

The original decisions to close Chernobyl and halt nuclear power plant construction came after Ukraine seceded from the former Soviet Union.

Millions in Ukraine were outraged at efforts by Mikhail Gorbachev's regime to conceal the scope of the 1986 core meltdown at Chernobyl's number four reactor.

Like its Soviet predecessor, the Russian government of Boris Yeltsin continues to maintain the official fiction that only 32 people died in the catastrophe, either technicians at the plant or local firefighters who doused the radioactive blaze.

Ukraine environmental activists, veterans of the massive army-led cleanup of the area as well as scientists contend that a minimum of 7,000 have thus far perished from diseases caused by the accident.

Estimates of deaths into the next century due to cancer, heart disease, and related illnesses range into the hundreds of thousands.

The Chernobyl blast released radioactive material into the atmosphere contaminating whole regions of Ukraine and neighboring Belarus. Poisonous airborne deposits made their way across Europe, Scandinavia, and around the world.

Cancer, thyroid conditions, neurological and psychological disorders, and decreased resistance to illness are common in Belarus and Ukraine, where thousands of square miles of farmland remain unfit for cultivation.

Hundreds of soldiers involved in decontamination efforts have committed suicide. And the meager benefits most victims of the nuclear catastrophe and its cleanup were given have been slashed on the road to the market economy, the goal of both the Yeltsin and Kravchuk regimes.

In the wake of the meltdown, reactor number four was entombed in a cement casing, known as a sarcophagus.

Within this concrete shroud are broken walls, shattered beams, and a devastated reactor chamber covered in deadly plutonium dust.

Many scientists involved in checking the sarcophagus contend the structure cannot hold fatal radioactivity inside, a position echoed by Ukraine's environment minister, Yuri Kostenko, after the parliament's recent vote.

"Any accident [at Chernobyl] will involve the release of radioactive waste into the atmosphere," he stated.

Chernobyl's three other reactors continued operating in the wake of the 1986 disaster until 1991, when a powerful fire wrecked part of number three, forcing its closure. Two reactors in the crippled plant are currently on line.

Ukraine's Ministry of Atomic Energy reports that 115 safety violations have occurred at the country's nuclear power operations so far this year, 11 more than took place in the same period in 1992.

These violations include the shutting off of automatic safety systems and diverting power to boost production.

A "test" of a similar nature triggered the chain reaction, which led to the 1986 meltdown at Chernobyl number four. Despite this accident record, the Ukraine government dismisses charges its reactors are dangerous.

While there is no such thing as a safe

nuclear power plant — as periodic explosions, fires, and leaks at U.S. facilities indicate — the Chernobyl-style reactors are even more menacing.

Eleven such graphite reactors generate power in Russia, while two operate in Lithuania.

Other nuclear operations in the former Soviet Union are in perilous condition, as well.

In April of this year, part of a Siberian plant manufacturing plutonium exploded. Russian officials moved quickly into a damage-control mode, denying the severity of the accident.

Within a week they were forced to admit that deadly plutonium had been released into the atmosphere.

"The 2 percent of nuclear energy that Chernobyl supplies to Ukraine's citizens," Tsvitkova stated, "will never justify Chernobyl's victims of the past, present, and future."

Jon Hillson is a member of the United Transportation Union in St. Paul, Minnesota.

FROM PATHFINDER

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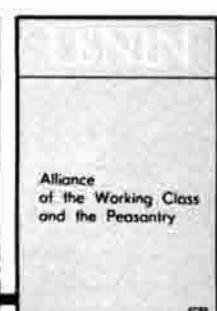
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'Militant' has proud record in fight against imperialist wars

BY SARA LOBMAN

At a recent Militant Labor Forum in Newark, New Jersey, the question came up: Wouldn't it be good if working people could get some legislation passed that would force the government to ask us before they could go to war in Haiti, Somalia, or anywhere else?

In the spirit of the \$75,000 fund that has been launched to commemorate the 65th anniversary of the *Militant*, I took a look back at a discussion that was carried out in the pages of the *Militant* and in the Socialist Workers Party in early 1938.

The Jan. 15, 1938, issue of the *Militant* reported on the founding convention of the Socialist Workers Party that had taken place in Chicago over New Year's weekend. The convention had analyzed the crisis of capitalism that was hurting humanity towards an international imperialist slaughter.

"The American working class is face to face with a heavy employers' onslaught upon its standard of living," the article said. "The capitalists are proceeding to throw new hundreds of thousands out of work and to cut the wages of those whom they continue to employ."

"Even more menacing than the crisis and the anti-labor drive is the growing threat of war," the *Militant* continued. "Every capitalist country of the world is preparing feverishly for the day when the world war actually breaks out."

The convention, the *Militant* reported, had resolved to stand "consistently and firmly against the imperialist war-mongers" and to "seek to utilize the crisis of capitalism for the purpose of overturning the rotten social system and thus putting an end to the war which is inherent in it."

In the midst of this ruling-class drive toward war, Rep. Louis Ludlow submitted a proposal to Congress that would have required the U.S. government to conduct a national referendum before going to war against another country. The same issue of the *Militant* that reported on the SWP convention ran an article on the defeat of the Ludlow Amendment by a vote of 209-188.

Referendum can't prevent war

The *Militant* correctly pointed out that a law requiring a referendum "could not possibly prevent the government from entering into war if the decisive section of the capitalist class deemed it necessary." Imperialist war, the article said, is caused by rivalries between capitalist powers for markets, raw materials, and fields of investment. "These rivalries," the *Militant* explained, "are inherent in imperialism."

A few months later, *Militant* editor James Cannon and several other leaders of the Socialist Workers Party were able to discuss the question of a national referendum on war with communist leader Leon Trotsky.

The *Militant* had been correct, Trotsky said, when it pointed out that the Ludlow Amendment would not have stopped the rulers' drive toward war. But, he argued, the paper should have also welcomed the fight to let working people vote against the war as an indication of the deep mistrust that working people were beginning to have in some of their elected representatives and in their desire to "check them [on] this important question."

It was through being part of the fight for a referendum, while at the same time clearly explaining that no law could stop an imperialist

war, that the Socialist Workers Party would win working people to a communist perspective.

* * *

The question of imperialist war remains one of the central questions facing working people more than 55 years later. And from Haiti to Somalia the *Militant* remains the best source of working-class news and analysis.

As we enter the fourth week of the drive, 19 cities have sent in payments toward their goals. This week \$4,010 was sent to the business office. This is up from last week but still a long way from the \$8,300 we need to collect every single week to be on schedule. *Militant* supporters in the Twin Cities, Minnesota, are the first to raise their goal, increasing it by \$1,000 to \$5,500!

The highlight last week was the special Militant Labor Forum in Los Angeles to kick off the fund in that area. Martín Koppel, editor of the *Militant*'s Spanish-language sister publication *Perspectiva Mundial*, spoke to an audience of 75, including many who were attending the forum series for the first time. Koppel spoke on the subject of the pamphlet he authored, *Peru's Shining Path: Anatomy of a Reactionary Sect*, just published by Pathfinder Press. Participants contributed \$300 and pledged another \$5,000 to the fund.

Koppel had spoken the day before at a conference of the Pacific Coast Council on Latin American Studies, held at nearby Chapman University. Two college students came from Mexicali, Mexico. Ten people subscribed to the *Militant* or *Perspectiva Mundial* during the weekend events and eight purchased copies of *New International*.

	Goal	Paid	Percentage	
Albany	\$ 200	\$ 125	63%	66,700
Pittsburgh	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,000	50%	
Detroit	\$ 3,500	\$ 860	25%	
Miami	\$ 2,000	\$ 401	20%	
New York	\$ 4,000	\$ 675	17%	58,300
Greensboro	\$ 2,000	\$ 335	17%	
Morgantown	\$ 1,250	\$ 165	13%	
San Francisco	\$ 6,500	\$ 831	13%	50,000
Cleveland	\$ 2,750	\$ 302	11%	
Seattle	\$ 2,500	\$ 250	10%	
Atlanta	\$ 2,750	\$ 200	7%	
Washington, D.C.	\$ 2,400	\$ 155	6%	41,700
Salt Lake City	\$ 2,500	\$ 150	6%	
Philadelphia	\$ 3,800	\$ 200	5%	
Newark	\$ 4,000	\$ 210	5%	
Twin Cities*	\$ 5,500	\$ 250	5%	
St. Louis	\$ 3,425	\$ 110	3%	
Los Angeles	\$ 6,500	\$ 200	3%	33,300
Birmingham	\$ 2,000	\$ 55	3%	
Baltimore	\$ 2,000	\$ 0	0%	
Boston	\$ 3,000	\$ 0	0%	25,000
Brooklyn	\$ 3,000	\$ 0	0%	
Chicago	\$ 5,000	\$ 0	0%	
Cincinnati	\$ 300	\$ 0	0%	
Des Moines	\$ 2,000	\$ 0	0%	
Houston	\$ 3,000	\$ 0	0%	16,700
New Haven	\$ 500	\$ 0	0%	
Other	\$ 188			
TOTAL	\$78,375	\$ 6,662	9%	8,300
SHOULD BE	\$75,000	\$25,000	33%	

*Raised goal

I pledge \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 other

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Gov't presents no evidence in N.Y. bombing case

BY NAOMI CRAINE

A full month into the trial of four men accused of bombing the World Trade Center in New York, the U.S. government has called dozens of people to the witness stand. Yet not one piece of concrete evidence tying the defendants to the blast has been offered in the highly publicized proceedings. All four insist they did not carry out the bombing.

So far the prosecution has merely managed to establish that a large explosion beneath the trade center last February 26 killed six people, wounded 1,000 others, and destroyed vehicles in the towers' underground parking garage, one of which may have been a yellow van rented by one defendant.

The first week and a half of testimony was devoted to describing the panic, injuries, and deaths among the tens of thousands who were in the buildings at the time of the blast. This included the prosecution presenting photographs and autopsy reports described by defense attorneys as "shockingly gruesome."

"I object to cumulative evidence designed to prejudice the jury, especially since we concede the deaths were caused by an explosion," stated Austin Campriello, who is representing Ahmad Ajaj. Federal judge Kevin Duffy overruled the defense lawyer and allowed the photos to be submitted.

Next, various debris from vehicles that were near the center of the explosion were

presented one piece at a time. A parade of cops, investigators, and others described the wreckage, and scraps were passed around for the jury to examine.

The *New York Times* described this as the "most important physical evidence" in the government's case. Prosecutors allege that the explosion was caused by a bomb placed in a yellow Ford van rented by Mohammed Salameh, one of the defendants. Salameh did rent such a van, but says it was stolen the day before the blast.

One of the fragments was a door hinge. FBI agent Donald Sachtlen said it matched the hinge on a Ford van obtained by the cops for just such a comparison. Defense lawyer Hassen Abdellah asked whether the FBI had checked if it matched any other types of vehicles. "Not to my knowledge," the cop replied.

Asked whether he had been influenced in his investigation by Salameh's arrest and the government's assertion that he rented the vehicle used in the bombing, Sachtlen said, "I don't know if I would use the word 'influenced.' It gave us some possible idea of what to look for."

The defense lawyers argue that the cops only took fragments that might match the vehicle they wanted to describe. They also did not record exactly where debris was found and by whom.

On October 27, the *New York Times* noted that none of the 53 witnesses called to date "gave any evidence that specifically related to the defendants, who do not deny that a damaging explosion took place at the World Trade Center."

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms official Joseph Hanlin said during cross-examination that the cops did not find any chemical residue indicative of explosives on the metal scraps.

Meanwhile, another federal judge re-

leased Earl Gant on bail October 18, pending trial. Gant is one of 15 people indicted on broad conspiracy charges in relation to an alleged plot to bomb various sites in the New York area. In addition to a \$250,000 bond, Gant's wife had to put up the deed to their house to get him out of jail. He is required to report to police in person every day, phone in three times a day, and have no contact with the other defendants, all of whom have been denied any bail.

Like the World Trade Center trial, the conspiracy case has been used by the government and media to whip up anti-Arab propaganda and attack democratic rights, including presumption of innocence, immigration rights, and the right to bail. Those arrested in both cases are routinely portrayed as "Muslim extremists."

The second case, in which no bombings were ever carried out, rests primarily on the testimony of Emad Salem, a well-paid FBI informant. Taped conversations between Salem and FBI officials seem to support the defendant's arguments that the informer tried to entrap them.

One of those indicted is Omar Abdel Rahman, who preached in mosques in Jersey City, New Jersey, and Brooklyn, New York, that many of the other defendants attended. He is charged with ordering the alleged conspiracy. Prominent civil liberties lawyer William Kunstler is representing Abdel Rahman and two others in the case free of charge.

Federal judge Michael Mukasey has threatened to disqualify Kunstler from representing Abdel Rahman, claiming it would be a conflict of interests with his other two clients. The cleric maintains he should have the right to the lawyer of his choice. The government prosecutor has said he will file a motion to dismiss Kunstler from the case altogether, though it is not clear on what basis.

NEW FROM PATHFINDER

Peru's Shining Path

Anatomy of a Reactionary Sect

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

The guerrilla group known as Shining Path presents itself as a leader of the oppressed. In reality, however, it is a reactionary sect that, in the name of communism, seeks to drive workers and farmers out of political activity through terrorist methods.

How can Shining Path's growth be explained? What is its actual record and political perspective? Is there an alternative for workers and peasants fighting to defend their interests against the wealthy rulers? This pamphlet answers these questions. \$3.50



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INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO WIN NEW READERS

DRIVE GOALS: 3,000 MILITANT ■ 700 PERSPECTIVA MUNDIAL ■ 1,200 NEW INTERNATIONAL

Best week yet for circulation drive, all goals within reach

BY GREG ROSENBERG

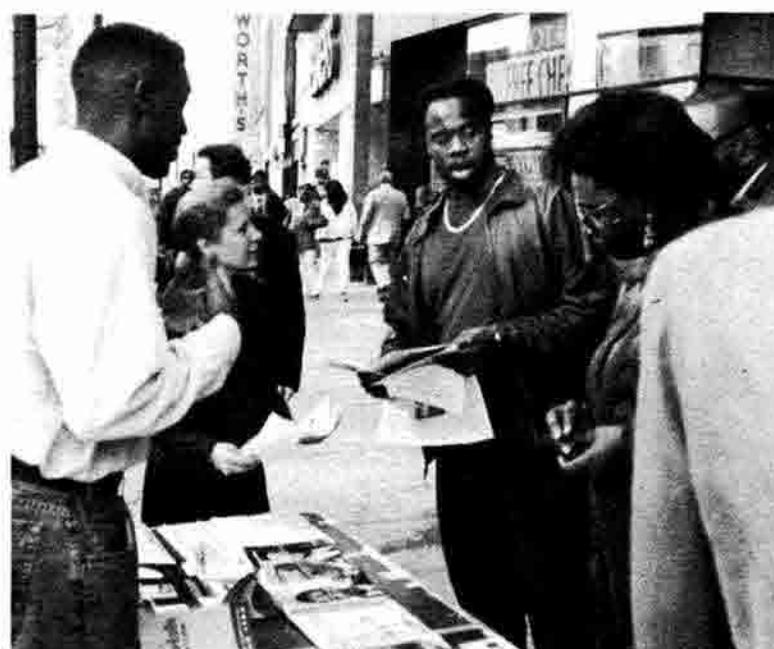
Supporters of the *Militant* had their best week yet in the circulation campaign. Since last Tuesday the business office received 385 subscriptions to the *Militant*, 68 to its sister publication in Spanish *Perspectiva Mundial*, and reports of sales of 138 copies of the Marxist magazine *New International*. All the international goals are now within reach.

In the final stretch of the circulation campaign, the task is to keep the pressure on. As readers can see from the scoreboard, we still have to sell 571 *Militant* subscriptions to reach the goal of 3,000. A concurrent challenge is to sell 233 *Perspectiva Mundial* subscriptions and 511 copies of *New International*. This will take supporters in every area organizing to make or surpass all of their goals.

In the spirit of aiding the international effort, distributors in Philadelphia and Los Angeles have volunteered to travel to the New York area to help supporters there pick up the pace.

The crisis-ridden capitalist system is engendering new wars and worsening economic conditions for workers and farmers throughout the world. But it is also generating resistance. The victory scored by workers in France against plans by Air France to lay off 4,000 people inspired thousands around the world. The best place for workers and young people to read about these fights is in the pages of the *Militant*.

Los Angeles supporters had an outstanding week, selling 30 *Militant* and 36 *PM* subscriptions, along with 21 copies of *New International*. Supporters organized day-



Militant/Mike Italie

Street table in Cleveland draws interest in *Militant*

long tables at many campuses.

At Chapman University in Orange, California, a Latin American studies conference featured a debate between supporters of Peru's Shining Path and *Perspectiva Mundial* editor Martín Koppel. Students there bought four *Militant* subscriptions, five to *Perspectiva Mundial*, and four *New Internationals*.

"Why aren't working people organizing against the Ontario New Democratic Party government social contract?" asked a student at McMaster University at Hamilton in Canada. A daylong table there by Toronto supporters sparked debate, and the sale of six *Militant* subscriptions and two copies of *New Internationals*.

Des Moines, Iowa, supporters

had their best week in the drive, and are confident they can make all their goals by the final scoreboard. Members of the United Food and Commercial Workers sold one *Militant* and two *Perspectiva Mundial* subscriptions to coworkers on the job, along with two copies of *New International*.

Three members of the United Mine Workers of America bought *Militant* subscriptions in the Birmingham, Alabama, area last week. Distributors there also fielded a successful team to the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa.

To appear on the final scoreboard, all subscriptions and *New International* report forms must be in the business office by 12:00 noon EST November 16.

Report questions 'plot' to kill Bush

BY PAT SMITH

The White House attempted to justify the bombing of Baghdad this summer on "evidence" from an FBI report that claimed the Iraqi government ordered the alleged plot to kill former president George Bush in Kuwait. At least 8 civilians were killed and 20 wounded by 23 U.S. Tomahawk missiles June 26.

A widely publicized report by Seymour Hersh, which appeared in the November 1 issue of the *New Yorker* magazine, assailed the government's claims as less than credible.

The allegations began last April when the Kuwaiti government said it arrested 17 Iraqis and Kuwaitis who, under interrogation, confessed to attempting to kill Bush and that a powerful bomb capable of killing everyone within 400 yards had been found.

The author questioned the credibility of the initial claims by reminding readers of the Kuwaiti government's history of false accusations against Baghdad with the motive of winning favor from the White House.

Kuwait's minister of information, Sheikh Saud Nasir al-Sabah, briefed the international press on the alleged assassination plot. His teenage daughter had testified before U.S. Congress three years earlier that Iraqi soldiers stole babies out of incubators during their occupation of Kuwait. This was later exposed as a hoax. Accusations before the UN Security Council in August 1991 of an Iraqi military raid on disputed territory then controlled by Kuwait also proved to be invented.

Shortly after Bush's visit a debate broke out among the U.S. rulers over whether to retaliate against Iraq. Af-

ter two months of testing the waters Attorney General Janet Reno provided President Bill Clinton the needed excuse to bomb Baghdad by approving an FBI report outlining "powerful evidence" of an Iraqi plot to kill Bush. Two days later Clinton ordered the attack. "I feel quite good about what transpired. I think the American people should feel good," Clinton said as reports of dozens of Iraqi civilians being killed and wounded hit the news.

In an unusual Sunday session of the UN Security Council, following the U.S. bombing raid, chief U.S. delegate to the United Nations Madeleine Albright presented what the White House claimed was "compelling evidence" to justify the slaughter. She repeated Clinton's explanation that the missile attacks, which came two months after the alleged plot was announced, were initiated under the self-defense provisions of Article 51 of the UN Charter.

Albright showed pictures of the alleged bomb whose components Washington claimed were "almost exactly the same" as those of Iraqi car bombs discovered during the Gulf War.

The author exposed what he calls "the most glaring weakness of the Administration's case . . . its assertion that the remote control firing device . . . has the same 'signature' as previously recovered Iraqi bombs." Hersh interviewed seven independent experts in electrical engineering and bomb forensics to ask what they thought of the photographs. "They all told me essentially the same thing," he stated. "The remote-control devices shown in the

White House photographs were mass-produced items, commonly used for walkie-talkies and model airplanes and cars, and had not been modified in any significant way."

One expert, Paul Eden from the University of Miami, stated, "I saw nothing that would make them any different from anything bought off the shelf from any electronics store."

"I wouldn't take this to the World Court," said another. "They might throw it out and make you pay court costs."

Washington's prized confessions by 2 of the 14 men on trial in Kuwait for the assassination plot are also picked apart by Hersh. At least 10 of the defendants face possible death sentences. The FBI claimed to have found no evidence that the confessions were the product of torture. "No medical examinations of the men were conducted, officials conceded, nor were lie-detector tests used," said Hersh.

One of the defendants showed up on the first day of the trial, in June, with "a fresh scar on his forehead and a blackened nail on his thumb. No one could talk to him," a freelance U.S. journalist told Hersh. Lawyers for the defendants were unable to confer with their clients until the first day of the trial. Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have both documented cases that show torture to be commonplace in Kuwait's prisons.

"My own investigations have uncovered circumstantial evidence, at least as compelling as the Administration's, that suggests that the American government's case against Iraq . . . is seriously flawed," concluded Hersh.

WHERE WE STAND

SOLD: 81% 2,429

SHOULD BE: 90% 2,700

END OF WEEK NINE

	The MILITANT	PERSPECTIVA MUNDIAL	NEW INTERNATIONAL
	SOLD / GOAL	SOLD / GOAL	SOLD / GOAL
UNITED STATES			
Albany	6	5	120%
Philadelphia*	114	105	109%
Los Angeles*	199	190	105%
Cincinnati*	14	14	100%
Pittsburgh*	82	85	96%
Miami*	115	120	96%
San Francisco	111	120	93%
Houston*	64	70	91%
Salt Lake City, UT	77	85	91%
Cleveland*	75	85	88%
Morgantown, WV	56	65	86%
Detroit	72	85	85%
St. Louis	61	75	81%
New Haven, CT	12	15	80%
Boston	91	115	79%
Chicago	102	130	78%
Twin Cities, MN	86	110	78%
Greensboro, NC	57	75	76%
Seattle*	56	75	75%
Des Moines, IA	66	90	73%
Portland, OR	10	15	67%
Birmingham, AL	47	75	63%
Newark, NJ	81	130	62%
Washington, DC	44	75	59%
New York	77	135	57%
Atlanta	45	80	56%
Brooklyn	73	130	56%
Baltimore	39	70	56%
Albuquerque, NM	1	2	50%
Denver	5	10	50%
U.S. Total	1,938	2,436	80%
		396	603
			485
			898
AUSTRALIA			
	17	35	49%
		5	10
			13
			20
BELGIUM			
	1	—	—
		1	—
			0
BRITAIN			
London	56	65	86%
Manchester*	43	50	86%
Sheffield	30	35	86%
Britain Total	129	150	86%
		5	9
			43
CANADA			
Vancouver	72	70	103%
Montreal	49	70	70%
Toronto	56	85	66%
Canada Total	177	225	79%
		24	37
			62
			115
FRANCE*			
	9	10	90%
		1	3
			12
			15
GERMANY			
	3	—	—
		0	—
			0
GREECE*			
	9	11	82%
		1	1
			6
			5
ICELAND			
	4	10	40%
		0	1
			0
NEW ZEALAND			
Auckland*	65	70	93%
Christchurch*	34	40	85%
New Zealand Total	99	110	90%
		8	10
			11
			20
PUERTO RICO*			
	1	2	50%
		9	7
			9
SWEDEN			
	41	60	68%
		22	20
			48
OTHER INT'L			
	1	—	—
		0	—
			0
TOTAL	2,429	3,049	81%
SHOULD BE	2,700	3,000	90%
		630	700
			1,080
			1,198

IN THE UNIONS

	The MILITANT	PERSPECTIVA MUNDIAL	NEW INTERNATIONAL
	SOLD / GOAL	SOLD / GOAL	SOLD / GOAL
UNITED STATES			
ACTWU	29	32	91%
ILGWU	15	20	75%
UMWA	43	60	72%
OCAW	53	75	71%
IAM	63	90	70%
UTU	57	86	66%
USWA</			

National Network on Cuba plans action campaign against Washington's embargo

BY JOHN COX

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Leaders of Cuba solidarity groups and national political organizations affiliated to the National Network on Cuba gathered here over the October 29–31 weekend to make plans for a stepped-up campaign of activities against the U.S. government's trade embargo of Cuba.

Delegates from local Cuba solidarity coalitions in cities from Honolulu, Hawaii, to Boston and from Portland, Oregon, to Miami were among the more than 60 participants. Representatives came from such national organizations as the Antonio Maceo Brigade, Pastors for Peace, and the National Lawyers Guild, as well as the Socialist Workers Party, Communist Party, and Committees of Correspondence.

The third U.S.-Cuba Friendship caravan was foremost among the activities discussed at the meeting. The convoy is scheduled to set off toward Cuba on Feb. 20, 1994, and will travel through more than 120 cities in the United States. The second Friendship, which took place last July-August, succeeded in delivering 100 tons of humanitarian aid to Cuba in open violation of the U.S. trade embargo.

Ellen Bernstein of the New York office of Pastors for Peace opened the meeting with a report on building the third caravan. Bernstein explained that Pastors for Peace, which organizes the project, hopes to involve more than 400 drivers in the upcoming Friendship, a hundred more than last time, and to double the amount of humanitarian aid delivered. She said Cuba solidarity organizations in Canada and Mexico are organizing to play an even bigger role in the next convoy and that there will be participants from Europe as well.

Bernstein also described work being done to build a November 19–December 1 Pastors for Peace volunteer construction brigade to Cuba. Some 40 participants are already signed up, she noted, but there is still room for more.

Throughout the weekend conference there was discussion of the political context that makes the work of the organizations affiliated to the National Network on Cuba so urgent today. Alfonso Fraga, head of the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, D.C., took part in a special session with delegates on Saturday morning. After making brief opening remarks, he answered questions and exchanged opinions with participants. Fraga discussed the Cuban government's efforts to alleviate the increasingly severe shortages of all basic necessities in his country due to the combined impact of the U.S. economic blockade and the disintegration of Havana's long-standing trade relations with the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

The Sunday morning session was opened with a report by Andrés Gómez of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, who emphasized the fact that the growing economic crisis in Cuba has polarized the Cuban community in the United States as well. Recent polls



Militant/Mark Rahn
Activists in Morgantown, West Virginia, loading supplies for the U.S.-Cuba Friendship caravan in July. The National Network projected building a third caravan, which will depart for Cuba in February 1994, as one of its central activities.

show that a large majority of Cubans in Miami are opposed to Washington's trade embargo because of the hardships it inflicts on their families and friends in Cuba, he noted. At the same time, the ultraright sections of the Cuban exile community in Miami have been emboldened. "They feel they have Cuba by the throat," Gómez said, "and if they can tighten the blockade, there will be no way out" for Cuba.

Under these conditions, Gómez insisted, every act of solidarity has real meaning to people in Cuba. Not only does every bottle of aspirin and every package of powdered milk make a difference, he said, but, precisely because the outlook seems so bleak, the solidarity efforts within the United States have an impact on political morale as well.

Solidarity activists today have "the highest responsibilities," Gómez concluded. "The more we work, the more we give the Cuban people space to continue."

This was the political context in which delegates also spent considerable time discussing how to build the broadest possible defense of the 175 U.S. residents who visited Cuba in October as part of a challenge to travel restrictions imposed by the U.S. government. Pam Montanero of the Freedom to Travel Campaign based in San Francisco outlined plans to open Freedom to Travel offices in every state and broaden efforts to demand that the U.S. government not indict those who violated Treasury Department regulations, return passports seized from many participants on their return to the United States, and end the travel restrictions.

The National Network on Cuba reaffirmed its support for the Freedom to Travel Challenge and plans by various groups to organize additional trips to Cuba in the coming six months to expand opposition to the travel ban. Several projects already planned will now take on a "freedom to travel"

aspect, including the construction brigade being organized by Pastors for Peace in November, a second Freedom to Travel contingent at the end of December, the Friendship in February, and the 25th anniversary Venceremos Brigade in April.

The Network also endorsed the upcoming speaking tour of Arleen Rodríguez Derivet and Pavel Díaz Hernández, two Cuban youth leaders who have been invited by a group of students and professors at the University of Minnesota to visit several cities in the United States in February and March of next year.

While the schedule was tight, the meeting organized time to hear reports on the work of the standing Network task forces on legislative priorities, labor, the United Nations, and media.

Emile Milne, legislative director for Rep. Charles Rangel from New York, attended one session as a special guest, bringing a report on the efforts to broaden congressional support for legislation introduced by Rangel to end the trade embargo.

Another special guest at the gathering was Armando Osorio representing the Mexican solidarity organization ¡Va Por Cuba! Osorio brought with him a proposal from ¡Va Por Cuba! to organize a tri-national solidarity conference involving activists from Mexico, Canada, and the United States next April in Los Angeles. The National Network on Cuba adopted this proposal and scheduled its next meeting to coincide with the tri-national conference.

Six new organizations were voted into the Network at the meeting, including the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES), the Caribbean Task Force of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, and several local coalitions. This brings the number of member organizations to approximately 40.

During its final session the Network also elected four national coordinators: Gómez of the Antonio Maceo Brigade in Miami, Leslie Cagan from the Cuba Information Project in New York, Ignacio Meneses of the U.S.-Cuba Labor Exchange in Detroit, and Holly Fink of the Venceremos Brigade in San Francisco.

UN vote condemns embargo of Cuba

Continued from front page

Cuba and closes U.S. ports to ships that have docked in Cuba within the previous six months.

Australia, France, Sweden, Belgium, and New Zealand, concerned with defending their own trade and markets in a period marked by economic crisis, were among the 88 countries that approved the resolution titled, "Necessity of Ending the Economic, Commercial and Financial Embargo Imposed by the United States of America Against Cuba." Fifty-seven countries abstained.

A year ago, when the General Assembly de-

bated and approved a similar resolution, delegates from 59 countries registered a vote against the embargo. The sizable increase in the number of delegations opposing the embargo confirms both the failure of the U.S. government to completely isolate Cuba from the rest of the world and the growing competition and trade tensions between Washington and other imperialist powers. These governments cannot and will not place subservience to U.S. policy ahead of opportunities for investment in Cuba, especially in the absence of competition from U.S. firms.

The discussion also reflected almost a year of noncompliance by the U.S. government with the 1992 resolution.

"In spite of the will expressed by the international community, the government of this great power has continued with the promulgation, application, and enforcement of the laws and measures of the blockade rejected by the General Assembly," Fernando Remírez, Cuba's permanent representative to the United Nations told the assembly.

In a written report submitted earlier to the UN secretary-general, Cuba outlined the U.S. campaign of covert action, slander, pressure, and blackmail aimed at stopping other countries from trading with the island nation. As a result of this intimidation, the statement explains, arrangements Cuba had made to purchase badly needed medicine, food, and oil fell through, and shipping companies canceled contracts to transport Cuban goods.

The embargo has brutally exacerbated the economic crisis confronting Cuba. Remírez estimated that over three decades Cuba has lost more than \$40 billion as a result of the embargo, the equivalent of 20 times its 1992 earnings.

Many of the delegates who spoke condemned Washington for trying to meddle with their country's trade. "We have always rejected U.S. involvement in the trade of

third states," the delegate from Belgium, which currently holds the presidency of the European Community, said.

Speaking on behalf of the 21 Ibero-American countries, the delegate from Brazil rejected the "extraterritorial nature" of the embargo and the U.S. rules and regulations that try to "restrict free trade and navigation."

The delegate from France, while condemning "frequent violations of democratic rights in Cuba," accused Washington of violating the basic principles of "freedom of trade and national sovereignty."

Several delegates — especially from Africa, Asia, and Central America — defended Cuba's right to national independence and self-determination. "It is Cuba and its people alone who must define their own path to better and higher stages of development," the Mexican delegate said.

Several hours after the UN debate, a panel of opponents of the U.S. embargo announced plans to increase activities in opposition to the embargo and to launch a national campaign to defend participants in the October "Freedom to Travel Campaign" trip to Cuba. Sixty of the 175 participants in the trip, who defied the U.S. travel ban by exercising their constitutional right to travel to Cuba, had their passports confiscated by U.S. Customs officials.

Speakers at the press conference included Rev. Lucius Walker, director of Pastors for Peace, which initiated the U.S.-Cuba Friendship caravans that have delivered tons of material aid to Cuba from the United States, Canada, and Mexico; Angel Williams, a 23-year-old participant in the Freedom to Travel trip, who was detained by U.S. officials; and Andrés Gómez, editor of *Ariete* magazine and a leader of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, a group of Cuban-Americans that opposes the embargo.

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S. Africa talks near constitutional accord

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Negotiators participating in multiparty talks are completing work on an interim constitution for South Africa. The plan is to have the document approved at a broader meeting of political leaders in early November and then formally ratified in a final session of the white minority parliament later in the month.

Once this step is taken, the Transitional

closed its eyes to the injustices of apartheid. "Judges and lawyers on the whole remained silent," stated Mandela. "Judges, magistrates, and prosecutors enforced apartheid laws without protest. Unwarranted sentences were called for and imposed for contravention of statutes passed to uphold apartheid.

"The restructuring of the judiciary must and will take place," insisted Mandela. "The



Leaders of right-wing Freedom Alliance, which opposes multiparty negotiations. At rear are Gen. Constand Viljoen of Afrikaner People's Front (left) and Ferdie Hartzenberg of Conservative Party. Seated in front, from left to right, are homeland leaders Lucius Mangope and Oupa Gqozo, with Inkatha Freedom Party's Mangosuthu Buthelezi.

Executive Council (TEC) will begin to function. The TEC will oversee the governance of the country leading up to the first-ever nonracial election scheduled for April 27, 1994.

The constitution will set the basis for creating a multiparty government of national unity to last for five years, which will be formed based on the results of the April election. A constituent assembly elected at that time will draw up the country's permanent constitution.

Key issues being discussed include the formation of a bill of rights, a constitutional court, and regional boundaries and powers.

While substantial powers will be given to regional governments in areas such as education, health, housing, welfare, and the police, the central government will have the right to intervene in these areas to impose uniform national norms and standards. Regions will be barred from imposing taxes without the central government's approval.

Bilateral discussions between the right-wing Freedom Alliance and the African National Congress (ANC) and with the National Party-led government have also been taking place. The Freedom Alliance, which includes the Inkatha Freedom Party, the white separatist Conservative Party, and the Afrikaner People's Front (AVF), opposes the multiparty negotiations underway. The AVF is demanding an autonomous state for whites.

Commenting on the political perspective of this group, ANC secretary-general Cyril Ramaphosa said, "Part of the problem is that they are creations of apartheid and have developed vested interests in an apartheid-type order. They therefore see change as a threat. At the same time, they have an innate fear of the electorate."

ANC leaders have made clear that while they are for holding constructive talks with the Freedom Alliance, this group will not be permitted to block progress being made in the multiparty talks.

"We cannot and will not turn the country into a kind of confederal state which will eventually break up along ethnic lines," said ANC spokesperson Carl Niehaus. "It's possible to solve what are legitimate fears about culture and language within the current [multiparty forum] set-up."

Mandela calls for judicial shake-up

In an address October 29 to the Transvaal Law Society, ANC president Nelson Mandela called for a major shake-up of South Africa's judiciary system.

He pointed out that although democracy and opposition to apartheid are now fashionable, the legal profession had in the past

vast majority of the people of South Africa cannot be asked to wait indefinitely for fundamental changes in the judiciary, which is not perceived to be sensitive to the needs and aspirations of all the people."

The advancing democratic movement has also plunged South Africa's police force into turmoil. About 375 striking policemen in the coastal town of Port Elizabeth, all non-whites, were dismissed October 19 after being partially disarmed by members of the police department's Internal Stability Unit.

A newly formed organization, the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union (POPCRU), is demanding the reinstatement of these policemen and the withdrawal of the Internal Stability Unit from the townships.

POPCRU, which claims 15,000 mostly Black members, is headed by former police officer Gregory Rockman, who was fired for criticizing some of the cops' repressive methods three years ago. Several thousand supporters of POPCRU and the ANC marched through the town of East London October 30 in support of the union's demand for recognition and the right to strike. They are planning to continue to protest, including picketing police stations.

Inkatha Freedom Party leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi organized a march in Johannesburg October 30 to protest the formation of this group.

COSATU plans November 15 strike

Meanwhile, about 10,000 trade unionists marched on the building housing South Africa's multiparty democracy talks October 28 to demand changes to labor legislation being drafted by the negotiators.

The Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) is demanding the removal of clauses allowing employers to lock out striking workers and providing an automatic guarantee of tenure to all civil servants in a post-apartheid South Africa. The ANC supports the removal of these clauses, while the South African government does not.

COSATU is continuing consultations in preparation for a November 15 general strike if this dispute is not resolved. Additional marches and protests are being planned for the weeks leading up to the strike deadline.

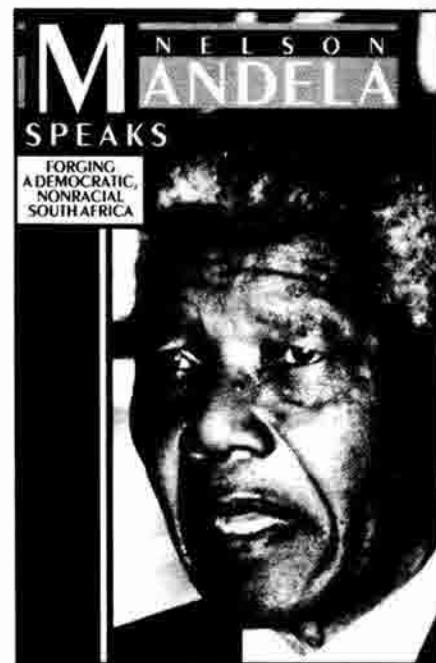
COSATU, which represents 1.2 million members, recently assigned 20 of its leaders as candidates on the ANC's election slate. At the end of September the 70,000-member South African Democratic Teachers Union voted to affiliate with COSATU and offered five of its leaders to be included on the ANC slate.

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Flight attendants at American Airlines prepare for a strike

BY RICK WALKER AND JANET POST

MIAMI — Flight attendants at American Airlines are preparing for a possible national strike. "We will go out on strike on or before November 22 if American does not back down on its concession proposals," said Julie May, Miami domestic flight chairperson for the Association of Professional Flight Attendants (APFA), which represents flight attendants at the company.

May had been participating in informational picket lines set up by APFA at the Miami airport at the end of October. Pickets have been organized at 15 airports in the United States served by American and are continuing into November.

American Airlines is the largest U.S. carrier with 119,000 employees, 949 planes, and 20 percent of the U.S. market share. Third-quarter profits in 1993 were \$118 million. An APFA official says that "1994 anticipated profits are \$760 million."

The informational picket lines in Miami have included nearly 150 participants every day who passed out thousands of leaflets. Nationally there are 21,000 American Airlines flight attendants, 2,200 of whom are based in Miami and Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

Brett Durkin, international flight chairperson of Miami APFA, said American and United ramp workers, mechanics, and ticket agents, as well as USAir mechanics have joined the picket line. The participation of other workers has heightened flight attendants' interest in discussing the United Mine Workers of America coal strike and the walkout by ground crews at Air France.

The union also set up "First Amendment zones" inside the terminal to leaflet. Airport authorities, however, stopped pickets from chanting such slogans as "We want a contract," said Durkin.

Under the Railway Labor Act, the APFA

contract became amendable in December 1992. After 11 months of negotiations with no progress, the National Mediation Board declared an impasse, which began a 30-day "cooling-off period" that ended October 29.

Two days later American said it intended to implement some of its wage and health-care proposals immediately, but not bidding restrictions and vacation cuts, which, according to an APFA national spokesperson, "would cause us to hit the streets overnight."

APFA South-Central regional administrator Diana Dunn said in an interview that the union launched a boycott of American Airlines November 2.

In 1993 flight attendants agreed to a two-tier pay scale with a 70 percent rate for new hires that requires nine years to reach full pay. Senior attendants' wages have been frozen for eight years, according to the union.

Company demands 'unacceptable'

APFA officials say American's October 30 wage offer of a 7.5 percent increase over four years is "unacceptable."

The company claims it is offering more than a 30 percent raise. But the union says this includes a 23 percent increase that workers would have received under the old contract through longevity. The company also proposes a 4 percent signing bonus.

According to Dunn, American is demanding to keep the two-tier scale. It also proposes to cut crew size, which "could result in the loss of 3,000 jobs."

In addition, American wants to cut guaranteed "flight hours," — in effect, a pay cut. Attendants are paid flight hours from the time a plane's brakes are released before takeoff until they are reapplied at its destination. During the rest of the hours away from home, flight attendants are paid \$1.50 an hour, which



Militant/Janet Post

Flight attendants hold informational picket at Miami airport October 28. The unionists are preparing for possible strike against American Airlines' concession demands.

American offered to raise to \$1.60.

"Another very big issue is vacation," said Durkin. With up to 15 years' seniority, attendants get two weeks' vacation. "The company wants us to work the flight hours we missed while on vacation in the same month," he explained.

May said the airline is also demanding a change in job bidding, where workers would bid trip by trip instead of monthly, "which would make it impossible to organize our lives."

The company is also asking attendants to begin copaying for health insurance, including a prefunded medical retirement plan. Currently this insurance is paid in full by the company.

Nine thousand out of the 11,000 pilots at American Airlines are represented by the

Allied Pilots Association (APA). At its October 26 meeting the APA Board of Directors voted to "fully support the APFA in their efforts to obtain a fair and equitable contract" and to conduct a sympathy-strike ballot of its membership.

In a nationally taped message, APA president Rich LaVoy said, "Individual pilots have the right to support a strike under the Railway Labor Act without being disciplined or terminated for this action."

"Pilots should let flight attendants on their crews know that you will not stand for replacement workers nor tolerate Lorenzo-style tactics." Frank Lorenzo was the head of Eastern Airlines when the Machinists' union struck in 1989.

An APA pilot walking the informational picket line in Miami, Alan Griffith, said he would not cross an APFA strike picket. "The flight attendants are the frontline people for the safety of passengers and the company does not treat them well," he said.

Eastern strike

Jeff Crecelius, an American flight attendant who used to work at Eastern, said, "The Eastern strike was the watershed event in my life. I think Robert Crandall is taking a page out of Lorenzo's notebook." Crandall is chairman of AMR Corp., the parent company of American Airlines.

Crecelius said that of the 2,200 American flight attendants in Miami, 600 are from other airlines — mostly Eastern and bankrupt Pan American.

"Both former Eastern strikers and those who crossed the line have been out here on the American informational picket line," he stated.

Rank-and-file flight attendant Armando Gutierrez said he is "encouraged by support from members of other unions. Labor is the scapegoat for the companies' problems," he added.

Gutierrez criticized another American proposal of "performance pay" based on bonuses if passengers write letters praising the workers.

Flight attendants are clearly taking strike preparations seriously. One woman worker with 23 years' seniority said she was withdrawing all her savings from the company credit union "just in case."

Ramp workers and mechanics at American are organized by the Transport Workers Union (TWU). According to APFA national spokespersons, top officials of the TWU have said their union would support an APFA strike "within its legal boundaries."

One TWU ramp worker who visited the Miami pickets stated, "We need to be out here with them. The actions of Crandall will be like those of Lorenzo; unifying people and making the unions stronger."

Rick Walker is a member of Transport Workers Union Local 568 at American Airlines. Janet Post is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 368 at United Airlines.

Air France strikers defeat layoff plan

Continued from back page
at Charles de Gaulle hitting everyone in sight including numerous passengers.

The government and the employers launched a campaign to try to break down solidarity that the strikers had won from other workers.

The French employers' association ran full page ads attacking the strike. "The restructuring plan is irrevocable," said French transportation minister Bernard Bosson in a television interview October 21. "What we are demanding is very modest. . . . Nobody [at Air France] earns less than 10,000 francs per month [US\$1,700] and the most anybody will lose is 150 francs [US\$25.50]."

Following this false statement, dozens of strikers showed their wage slips to reporters. Workers in the freight terminals and those at paint maintenance facilities earn 7,500 francs a month, of which 2,000 francs were to be cut in half or in some cases eliminated entirely.

Government backs off

But the government campaign was unable to break the strikers' determination. Solidarity with the strike continued to deepen. Passengers stranded at the airports continued to show their support for the strikers. "After all, they are right. They're defending their livelihood," said a tourist at the Orly Airport, reflecting a common sentiment.

As it became clear that solidarity with the strikers was sweeping the country, the government began to back off.

On October 22 the transportation minister announced cancellation of all wage cutbacks. "But the plan is irreversible and the main measures, including the elimination of 4,000 jobs, will be implemented," he said.

The next day, workers at Orly and Charles de Gaulle voted overwhelmingly to continue the strike. "We're simply demanding the withdrawal of [the government's plan]. The problem is not just wages," said Philippe Staron, a CGT shop steward. "We don't want any job cuts and we reject the breaking up and privatization of Air France. They're afraid of the extension of the strike. This is not the time to give up."

A broader strike was prepared for October 26. On that day, the Air France strikers were to be joined in a 24-hour work stoppage by the personnel of the domestic airline Air Inter, by workers at Aéroports de Paris, the nationalized company that manages the Paris airport system, and by some airplane crews of both Air France and Air Inter, including pilots, who had not taken part in the job action until then. Newspaper headlines began to announce a "Black Tuesday for the airlines."

On October 24 the government made a surprise announcement that the Air France plan was being withdrawn. A few minutes later, Air France president Bernard Attali resigned. Bosson said another plan will be proposed within six months. He later told the French parliament that this was "no longer a strike but a revolt."

"Workers at Air France have just proven that it's possible to fight against layoffs," said Louis Viannet, CGT general secretary.

Despite the retreat by the government, the strike continued, including the broader walkouts organized for October 26. The president of Air Inter, the second state airline, resigned as well. His replacement immediately declared that Air Inter "does not and will not have any plan [for layoffs]."

The October 26 strike actions were massive. 6,500 workers demonstrated at the Orly Airport and 3,500 at Charles de Gaulle. "This is the biggest demonstration at the airports since May 1968," remarked one striker. "This should show them that we do not want their plan, neither now nor in the future."

Many workers, particularly in the freight depots, continued the strike for several days to insist that a written agreement be made and that the days on strike be paid by the company. Most workers are distrustful of the new president of Air France, Christian Blanc, a close associate of Socialist Party secretary Michel Rocard. The last strikers in the freight depots voted October 29 to return to work.

The strike victory at Air France is the first sign of active resistance by the working class to the layoffs and cutbacks that the French capitalists are trying to impose on all workers. One of the first results of the Air France strike was a new wage agreement for government employees. Until October 23 the government categorically refused any such wage increase for civil servants. Some unions had asked for a minimum 5 percent increase over two years. In the middle of the Air France strike, the government finally gave in and agreed to an increase of 4.9 percent.

The success of the Air France strike has been an encouragement for other workers. Already plans are underway for a new "National Day of Action" November 18 called by 40 unions in big state-owned industrial companies. These include unions at the automobile manufacturer Renault, at the state-owned railroad SNCF, at the RATP, which runs the Paris bus and subway system, at SNECMA, which produces airplane engines, as well as at Air France.

Nat London and Jean-Louis Salfati are auto workers in the Paris region. London works at Renault and is a member of the CGT.

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Kentucky miners organize UMWA local

BY KATHY RETTIG
AND BERNIE SENTER

HAZARD, Kentucky — Until recently, membership in the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) in eastern Kentucky had dwindled to around 500. Most of them were retirees in the area where nonunion mines, owned by operators such as A.T. Massey, gained a strong foothold.

On October 24, membership in UMWA Local 5890 grew by 330, when miners at Cyprus Mountain Coal were inducted into the union at a picnic celebrating a successful organizing drive.

As the strike by 18,000 coal miners in seven states enters its sixth month, a federal judge in Charleston, West Virginia, fined the UMWA \$50,000 a day for each day union members violate a court injunction. U.S. District Judge Dennis Knapp said the union was violating his September 3 injunction forbidding mass picketing.

Federal mediator William Usery scheduled talks between the UMWA and coal companies for November 3 in Washington, D.C. Negotiations collapsed October 22 as the mine owners have refused to budge on their concession demands against the union.

Workers at Cyprus were the fourth contingent of miners to join the UMWA in southern West Virginia and eastern Kentucky since May. Some 1,200 miners have voted in the union at Ziegler Coal's Marrowbone Development Corp. and Wolf Creek Collieries, MAPCO's Pontiki mine, Cyprus Mountain Coal, and several smaller facilities.

Cyprus miners voted 184-144 to join the UMWA September 23-24. During the final weeks of the organizing campaign, workers came from the newly organized mines to help distribute information there.

"This used to be solid union country," said Steve Pendleton, one of the leaders of the organizing drive, referring to the coalfields in eastern Kentucky. "But somehow, 30 to 40 years ago, the local companies figure out a scheme to get rid of the unions."

Miners at Cyprus were on an organizing drive for more than five years. The UMWA lost the first vote, in 1989, 171-271. The day before the balloting, Cyprus gave everyone a \$1.50-per-hour pay raise and a bonus.

"The night we lost, one hundred miners signed union cards and we began again," Pendleton explained. "After we lost, we went ahead and organized a union anyway. About 60 of us started paying union dues and having regular meetings. We put a union together and we held it together."

Pendleton said union activists worked hard to persuade others to join the UMWA. "We made house calls and everything," he said. "But this time Cyprus did it all for us."

Miners said the company brought in a 30-member management team that knew little about strip mining and didn't care about safety. Cyprus attacked health insurance, imposing a \$400 deductible per person and \$2,000 per family. Bonus payments were reduced, miners were laid off, and overtime hours soared.

Elbert Hagans said he voted against the



Miners cheer at UMWA swearing-in ceremony October 24 in Hazard, Kentucky. Some 1,200 miners have joined the union in Kentucky and West Virginia since May.

union in 1989. "I came to regret it right away. I've spent the last four years trying to get the union in."

John Stacy, vice president of the revitalized UMWA Local 5890, said, "The union victories at Pontiki and Wolf Creek made all the difference for us. They made us stronger. Now we are going to try to get other mines organized."

A number of retirees came to the celebration including Woodard Hensley, 91, who was a miner for 49 years. When asked what he thought of the recent organizing victory, Hensley responded, "I'd sleep in the streets to be for it."

Joe Stanley, president of the UMWA's new Local 1993 at Marrowbone, the first big mine to go union this year, said in a phone interview, "We need to keep working hard to convince all miners, not just union miners, that the union is the only protection we have."

"We learned the hard way," he said. "Without a union, no matter what the companies promise you, it's not worth the paper it's written on."

Pendleton said that miners want to treat those who voted against the UMWA in the recent elections as fellow union members. "These coal companies are dirty and they'll do anything to you they can. All they care about is money. All of us have to be brothers to bring the union back to this part of the country."

Bernie Senter is a member of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 8-957 in Mor-



Militant/Kathy Rettig

gantown, West Virginia.

Airline workers support miners

BY KIP HEDGES

MINNEAPOLIS — Braving a windchill below zero, more than a dozen members of International Association of Machinists (IAM) Local 1833 at Northwest Airlines carried out the local's first ever plant gate collection here October 29. In quarters, dollar bills, and an occasional \$20, local members contributed almost \$1,900 to striking coal miners.

Miners Ken Hargis and Doug Hitt made the 12-hour drive from southern Illinois for the day to help with the collection. "When you see this kind of support it makes you realize you're not alone and that the unions do have real power when we use it," Hitt said.

Stopping to talk with the miners in spite of the weather, a mechanic told them, "I used to be an air traffic controller. When our union went down it hurt the whole labor movement. If your union goes down . . . well we can't let the miners union go down."

Johnny Daniel, a shop committee chairman, said that workers came into the committee office all day long after the gate collection so they could drop a few dollars in the bucket. "This has been a real union builder for us. We'll have to do it again," said Daniel.

Members of the United Transportation Union reported that their locals on the Soo line, Burlington Northern, and Chicago and North Western railroads have raised more than \$1,000 at recent meetings in support of striking coal miners.

Kip Hedges is a member of IAM Local 1833 in Minneapolis.

Ohio unionists welcome strikers

BY VALERIE LIBBY

CINCINNATI — A speaking tour here to build solidarity for striking miners lasted through October. Coal miners won new support from Teamsters, textile workers, carpenters, communications workers, and government employees. To date the miners have spoken to more than 1,000 people at dozens of meetings.

An important expansion of solidarity work in southwest Ohio took place when strike Rick Altman, vice-president of United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) Local 1638 in Wheeling, West Virginia, addressed the Dayton-Miami Valley Labor Council. Altman and two other strikers from his local were invited to stay for the whole meeting, and spoken with dozens of unionists there.

In light of the recent difficulties with negotiations, members of UMWA Region 1, which covers all of Ohio, Pennsylvania, and northern West Virginia, are gearing up for a more intense fight to win a contract and beat back the Bituminous Coal Operators Association's attempts to wring concessions from the union.

"In any strike situation the solidarity of other working people is key. . . . We learned that during the Pittston strike," said UMWA staff representative Babe Erdos in a telephone interview.

"We've talked, and we want to begin doing the kind of outreach we're doing in Cincinnati throughout the region," he continued.

"We're looking for locals in other cities who are willing to organize citywide tours as United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 647 in Cincinnati has done," Erdos explained.

Anyone interested in setting up speaking engagements for the miners can contact the UMWA District 6 office at (614) 676-3972.

UAW Local 647 has launched a new project to make holiday gifts available to the children of UMWA District 6 strikers.

Valerie Libby is a member of UAW Local 647 in Cincinnati.

Canada cops frame striking gold miners

BY JOE YOUNG

VANCOUVER, British Columbia — Canadian Association of Smelter and Allied Workers (CASAW) Local 4, which has been on strike for over 17 months at Royal Oak's Giant gold mine in Yellowknife, Northwest

Territories, is facing a vicious government frame-up campaign. On October 16, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) arrested and charged striking gold miner Roger Warren with nine counts of first-degree murder in the deaths of as many replacement workers. Warren's preliminary inquiry is set to start February 14 of next year.

An explosion at the mine killed nine replacement workers on September 1992. Since that time the company, the RCMP, and the big-business media have been attempting to blame the union for these deaths without presenting any evidence.

Two other strikers, Allan Shearing and Tim Bettger, were charged October 26 with a series of offenses, including setting an explosive device, possession of a prohibited weapon, and uttering threats to cause death, in other strike-related incidents. The mine was evacuated by the RCMP October 29 because of an alleged bomb threat. Nothing was found.

Addressing a benefit dance organized by the Vancouver Regional Municipal Employees Union October 29, CASAW Local 4 president Harry Seeton said, "When we tell people what the courts and the RCMP are doing against us, people don't want to believe this." He said an RCMP agent, who was asked if Warren had confessed, responded, "We can't tell you that, but when this is through the courts, you will know why we picked Roger Warren."

Seeton continued, "Knowing the RCMP in Yellowknife, a lot of us have questions if

justice is really being done." Referring to the fight to defend the unionists, Seeton stressed, "We're not doing this just for us; we're doing it for the whole labor movement in Canada. We could not exist without the generous support of our brothers and sisters across this country."

The owners of Royal Oak are trying to use the charges against the three strikers to separate the union movement as a whole from the embattled gold miners. In a press release dated October 18, the company stated, "We believe now more than ever that this union is not part of the mainstream Canadian labour movement and does not represent the true wishes of its membership. Royal Oak will soon be calling upon the federal Minister of Labour to undertake a complete investigation of this local union and its illegal activities during this strike."

The union won a victory October 28 when the Canadian Labour Relations Board ruled that the Giant Mine Employees Association (GMEA) is employer-dominated. The GMEA, composed of replacement workers at the mine, has been trying to depose CASAW Local 4 as the bargaining agent for the workers at the mine.

Messages of support can be sent to CASAW Local 4, P.O. Box 1628, Yellowknife, NWT X1A 2P2 Tel. (403) 873-4528, Fax (403) 873-5174.

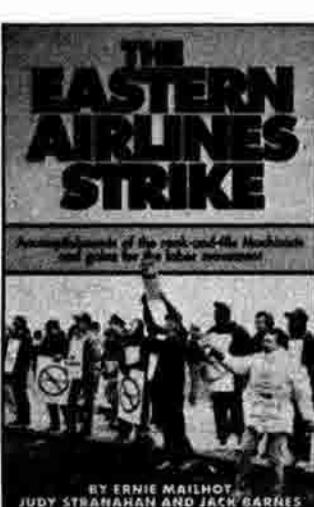
Joe Young is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 3495 in Vancouver.

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Russian land

Continued from Page 5

transition to a better system, and not to dare to give orders!" (Emphasis in original.)

In the mid-1920s — following the devastation, economic dislocation, and famine resulting from years of imperialist war, invasion, and civil war — a privileged bureaucratic layer arose within the Communist Party, headed by Joseph Stalin. This layer usurped the central leadership of the party and began to reverse many of the Bolsheviks' policies after Lenin's death in 1924.

Stalin carried out a political counterrevolution, usurping decision-making power from the working class and peasantry, drowning his opponents in blood, and carrying out policies aimed not at building socialism but at guaranteeing privileges for a petty-bourgeois caste.

Up until 1928, joining farm cooperatives was a voluntary decision by individual peasants. In 1929, Stalin called for "complete collectivization," and "the liquidation of the kulaks [rich peasants] as a class." Thus began the forced collectivization of the peasantry, carried out with brutality and dire long-term political and economic consequences.

"The destruction of people by hunger, cold, epidemics and measures of repression," wrote Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky in his book *The Revolution Betrayed*, "is unfortunately less accurately tabulated than the slaughter of stock, but it also mounts up to millions. The blame for these sacrifices lies not upon collectivization, but upon the blind, violent, gambling methods with which it was carried through."

Stalin's policies destroyed the worker-peasant alliance, and did lasting damage to agriculture in Russia.

Since the 1970s, the Soviet Union had to import about 15 percent of its annual grain needs.

Yeltsin's decree will solve neither the economic crisis in Russia nor open up anytime soon vast farmlands for lucrative investment for the wealthy families that rule the capitalist countries. But it will intensify instability and social inequalities in rural Russia and probably engender more struggles by toilers in the countryside and cities who are suffering from Moscow's austerity moves.

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Why the Embargo against Cuba Must End. Speakers: Tom Hansen, director of Pastors for Peace; Bud Deraps, board member, Friends of Peace Studies, University of Missouri at Columbia. Sat., Nov 13, 2-4 p.m. Main Lounge, University Center, Webster University. Sponsored by Cuba Solidarity Committee.

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Carlos Lage Dávila: IV São Paulo Forum Conference. Video. Fri., Nov. 12, 8 p.m. Casa de las Américas, 104 West 14th Street (corner of 6th Ave.). Tel: (212) 675-2584.

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1994 West Coast Ancient Forest Activists Conference. Annual conference that focuses on battle to save ancient forests of Pacific Northwest. Feb. 3-6, 1994. Southern Oregon State College. Sponsored by Headwaters. For more information, call (503) 482-4459.

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Apartheid's Final Hour: Advances and Challenges in the South African Revolution. Speakers: Dhini Soni and Urmilla Bob, African National Congress; and Sam Manuel, Socialist Workers Party. Sun., Nov. 14, 7:30 p.m. West Virginia University, Mountainair Shenandoah Room. Sponsored by WVU African Student Association. For more information call (304) 296-0055.

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U.S. Military Interventions: Peacekeeping or Imperialism? Sat., Nov. 13, 7:30 p.m. 111 21st St. South. Donation: \$3. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

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Why the Travel Ban and U.S. Embargo of Cuba Should be Ended. Speaker: William Eickholt, whose boat was returned and criminal charges dropped a few weeks ago by the U.S. government. Sat., Nov. 13, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

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No to the Death Penalty. Panel discussion. Sat., Nov. 13, 7:30 p.m. 2905 Greenmount Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (410) 235-0013.

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Immigrant Workers Under Attack. Panel dis-

cussion of government and employer assault on immigrant workers. Speakers: Representatives, immigrant rights organizations; Lisa Ahlberg, Socialist Workers Party, member, International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. Sat., Nov. 13, 7:30 p.m. 780 Tremont St. (corner Mass Ave.) Donation: \$3. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

MINNESOTA

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Defend Public Education. Oppose the University 2000 Plan. Panel discussion. Sat., Nov. 13, 7:30 p.m. 508 N. Snelling Ave. Donation: \$3. Unemployed: \$1. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

●

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What's Behind the Crisis of British Rule in Ireland? Sat., Nov. 13, 6 p.m. 47 The Cut, SE 1. Nearest BR/tube: Waterloo. Donation: £2. Tel: 71-928-7993.

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The Struggle for a Democratic South Africa Today. Speaker: Thulas Nxesi, leader, South African Democratic Teachers Union. Sat., Nov. 13, 7:30 p.m. 3967 Main St. (between 23rd and 24th Ave.). Donation: \$4. Tel: (604) 872-8343.

Rightist gunmen kill workers in N. Ireland

Continued from front page

the latest round of killings to bury the dead and send messages of condolence to both Catholic and Protestant families of the deceased. Workers from Harland and Wolf shipyard in Belfast came out en masse to attend the funeral of victims of the Shankill bombing.

In words evocative of colonialism, major British newspapers described the violence as "tribal." However, British security forces have been consistently implicated in organizing and giving intelligence to the right-wing Unionist gangs.

During the recent trial of British agent Brian Nelson it was revealed he helped organize an arms shipment from South Africa for the banned paramilitary Ulster Defence Association. The group supports the British occupation and is responsible for many of the recent attacks on Catholic and mixed families in Northern Ireland.

The Manchester *Guardian* reported November 2 that the British and Irish governments have responded to the wave of killings by deciding "to bury the Hume-Adams initiative and retake control of the peace-making process." British-sponsored talks to find a new constitutional arrangement for Northern Ireland had stalled before the Hume-Adams initiative.

Extra troops began arriving in Belfast October 26, the same day that a British soldier opened fire on a crowd of mourners outside the house of IRA activist Thomas Begley, who was killed when the bomb he was carrying exploded prematurely in the Shankill Road blast.

The talks between John Hume, leader of

the largely Catholic Social Democratic and Labour Party, and Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams had been at the center of media coverage for several weeks. It is widely speculated that this initiative, which Irish prime minister Albert Reynolds had endorsed, dealt with conditions for a cease-fire by the IRA and possible agreement that any constitutional change in Northern Ireland will be reached by consent of all parties. The British government is opposed to the involvement of Sinn Fein — which opposes British rule and supports the armed campaign of the IRA — in any talks.

Adams had already been banned by London from entering Britain before the Shankill Road bombing. Hume has had two meetings with British prime minister John Major and has reported to both the Irish and U.S. governments on the proposals he and Adams have drawn up. The content of the agreement had not been made public.

Further talks between Patrick Mayhew, Britain's secretary of state for Northern Ireland, and Irish foreign minister Dick Spring are planned for the first week in November.

Getting the Unionist parties represented in the British Parliament to negotiate is a thorny problem for the Major government,

however. The *Independent* reported that the prime minister has struck a deal with James Molyneaux of the Ulster Unionist Party to secure the votes of its nine members of Parliament. Major's government is on shaky ground. His Tory (Conservative) Party holds a slim 17-seat majority in Parliament and is wracked with divisions. So he is forced to make concessions to the Unionists.

The latest such concession by Major was giving in to Molyneaux's demand to recommend establishment of a parliamentary select committee on Northern Ireland, something the Unionists have wanted for a long time. The establishment of such a committee would give Northern Ireland the same status as Scotland and Wales, tying it more closely to the United Kingdom. The Unionists will reportedly chair the committee and hold 4 of the 13 seats on it.

A debate has broken out between capitalist politicians over whether to reintroduce internment, which was last done in 1971. Thousands were arrested without trial or right to appeal and held in jail indefinitely. Right-wing politicians, including leading Unionists, are calling for internment to be imposed by the Irish as well as the British government.

Miners indicted on frame-up charges

Continued from front page

on the scene an hour after the shooting. [Arch Mineral] security guards were given free run by the state police to search miner's vehicles. Nobody obtained a search warrant and they didn't find a thing."

Jim Grossfeld, UMWA press spokesperson, said, "We do not know the basis of these indictments and we believe there should be no rush to judge or attempt to try these men in the media, because in America everyone is innocent until proven guilty."

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GREAT SOCIETY

Good will and 'justice' don't mix — "MERCER, Pa. — A court will not hold any trials in the two



Harry
Ring

weeks before Christmas because prosecutors believe jurors taken over by the holiday spirit are in no mood to convict people." — News item.

Coverage doesn't begin at conception? — The financial director of a California hospital tells of a

woman who gave birth to premature twins. Her company health plan refused to pay most of the \$450,000 in bills that followed. Why? Because the twins were born sick and, therefore, had a preexisting condition which was not covered.

Plain talk — "Bank America says it will cut up to 3,750 jobs to boost profit" — News headline.

Willie the Weasel — When he moved into the White House, Clinton talked about boosting the \$4.25 minimum wage up to \$5.25. But his labor secretary has now drafted a proposal to increase it to \$4.75. And even that's a "liars can figure" number. Actually, the proposed increase

is 25 cents. What happened to the other quarter? That's represented by new or added health plan benefits which may result from pending legislation.

They could furlough Koon and Powell — At the recent Dutch-British soccer game in the Netherlands, 600 British fans were arrested during a street melee. Roger Kelly, who will head up security for the July championship game at the Rose Bowl stadium shrugged: "What we saw last night would not create a major problem for us in Los Angeles."

Did she get to go too? — When the San Francisco opera season opened, Ann Johnson, chair of the

Opera Ball, sported a necklace of diamonds and rubies said to be worth as much as \$17 million. Her bodyguard was a woman, "so that she can come into the bathroom with me."

Don't leave home without it — The *New York Times* ran a full-page promotional ad featuring a testimonial from a former airline employee who says he traveled the globe and learned to appreciate the international news in the paper. "There was always some political nonsense going on somewhere," he recalls, "and I depended on the *Times* not to get caught up in a coup."

Green as a dollar bill — The Federal Deposit Insurance Corp.,

which peddles the assets of bellied-up banks, is distributing a green brochure for an "environmental portfolio." It's an offering of properties with hazardous waste and like problems.

Like reshaped — Add this to your vocabulary. When you lose your job and find yourself flipping Big Macs, you are re-careering.

Each desk has a bracelet? — As owner of Condé Nast publications, media mogul S.I. Newhouse, Jr. is said to treat his executive underlings generously, with the perks trickling down. For instance, all employees get free lunch — provided they eat at their desks.

Students protest higher tuition in New Zealand

BY STUART NEEDHAM

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand — Spirited protests have taken place on a number of university campuses in recent months to protest planned increases in student fees for 1994.

University entrants currently have to pay \$1,000-\$5,000 (US\$550-\$2,800) in fees a year for most courses. Tuition will rise more than 20 percent at most universities next year. The introduction by the government of means-testing of parental incomes will force the majority of students to lose student allowances, pushing those who cannot afford it to take out bank loans. Campus activists have pointed out that these policies mean that university study will increasingly become the preserve of the wealthy.

In protest, 200 students at Lincoln University, near Christchurch, occupied the campus administration building October 21. More than 500 students at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch held a rally October 6. Another protest is planned for November 2.

Otago University in Dunedin has been the scene of some of the largest student protests this year. On September 28, cops dressed in riot gear and armed with batons attacked and broke up a rally of more than 500 students. The students had congregated outside the registry building, where a meeting of the University Council was taking place. A month earlier, the council had decided to introduce large tuition fee rises.

Without warning a squad of 25 cops

charged out of the building. The cops claimed that the demonstration had trapped council members in the building and they were justified in using force to clear a path to escort eight council members to a waiting police van.

In the violent assault by the cops, at least five students were taken to the hospital for treatment. Eight were arrested for "unlawfully being in a building," "disorderly assembly," or for breaching the peace.

One student told the *Otago Daily Times* he was hit twice in the stomach with a baton and grabbed around the throat. Another said she had been sitting at the top of the registry steps when the cops rushed out. As she tried to move away, she was shoved and a friend who tried to assist her was hit with a baton and kicked.

Students emphasized their protest had been a peaceful and legitimate one. The Otago University Students Association has received more than 35 complaints from students about being trampled on or batoned by the cops.

The day after the protest more than 600 students met to discuss how to respond. They called for the police officer who headed up the assault to be fired, and for the resignation of the University Council members who had left the meeting in the police van.

Stuart Needham is a member of the New Zealand Meat Workers Union in Christchurch.

Swedes march against racism

BY DAG TIRSEN

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — One hundred fifty youth in Trollhattan, Sweden, took to the streets October 16 in opposition to an anti-immigrant action of 200 people organized by the group "Sweden Democrats."

The town was the scene of a brutal attack against two Somali refugees and, shortly afterwards, the torching of a Muslim mosque, which burnt to the ground. Adherents of the "Sweden Democrats" were involved in both assaults.

"The rain was pouring down when we started to walk towards the racists," Jonas Olsfjeld said. "We were about 20 in the beginning. But as we walked we met others who joined." When the protesters reached the site of the racists' demonstration, they were met by a big show of force by the police, who had erected a riot fence to protect the racists.

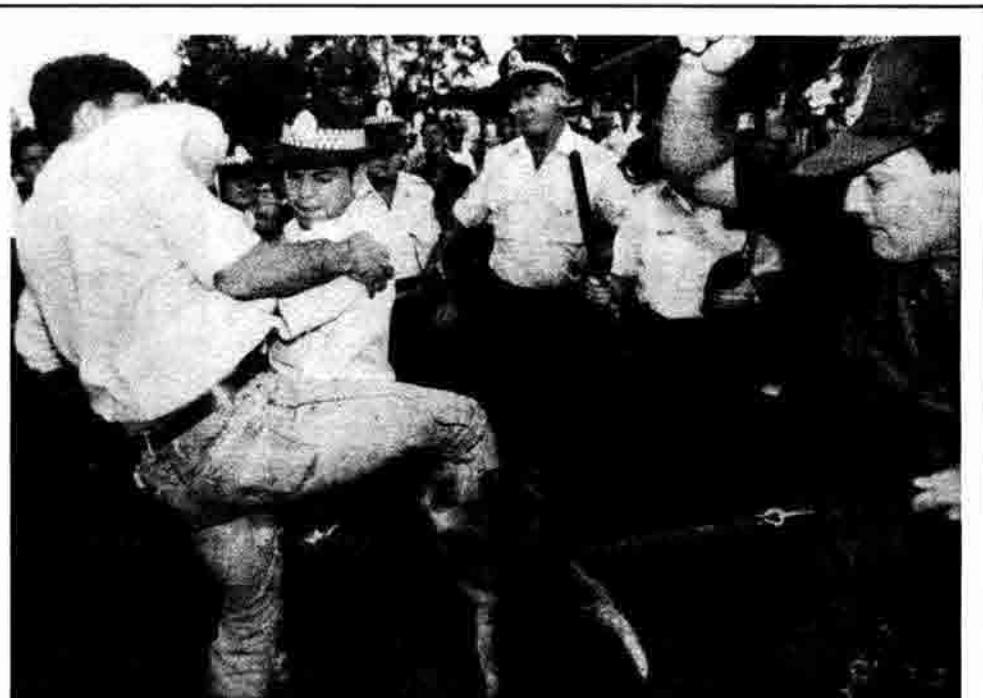
As a symbolic act of contempt the protesters turned away from the racists and put up posters saying: "Turn your back against the racists." In preparation for the protest the organizers discussed what tactics to follow. Several previous antiracist demonstrations in Sweden had given the false impression that protesters were against democratic rights, especially when activists mobilized around slogans such as, "No racists on our streets." Many actions resulted in clashes with police forces that protected the racists.

The organizers this time wanted to avoid such a confrontation. In preparation for the action, leaflets were distributed calling for "a peaceful counterdemonstration." The leaflet was decorated with a symbol showing a white and black hand holding each other and the slogan, "stop racism." The local newspaper advised people not to attend the countermobilization. After the action, however, its editors admitted its warnings were wrong.

From Trollhattan, the racists traveled in buses to the nearby city of Gothenburg. They were greeted by another counterprotest. Three hundred people, mostly anarchists, marched against the "nationalists," who were protected by the cops. When the countermarch approached the racists, the cops attacked and dissolved it. A few anarchists continued to fight the cops and also smashed some shop windows.

The day before, a broad march had been organized in Gothenburg. From 4,000-8,000 people, mostly youth, participated in the action, which had been called by more than 30 organizations. "Defend the right to asylum" and "stop the racist violence" were the main slogans. The big-business media refused to cover this mass action, while the anarchists' clashes with the cops got wide publicity.

Dag Tirsén is a member of Food Workers union Local 4 in Stockholm.



Australian police, armed with batons, dog squads, and mounted officers attacked a crowd of thousands at the annual Arabic Day Carnival at Tempe, a suburb of Sydney, October 17, allegedly to mediate an argument between several youth. Lebanese, Sudanese, Palestinian, Egyptian, and Iraqi immigrants gather at the annual event.

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —

THE MILITANT

Published in the Interest of the Working People

November 15, 1968

Price 10¢

A solidarity meeting with the 110 victims of U.S. colonial repression in Puerto Rico was held Nov. 1 at the Militant Labor Forum. The principal speaker was Florencio Merced of the Federation of University Students for Independence (FUPI). He is a defendant in the mass trials scheduled to begin Nov. 12.

Twenty-five of the defendants are facing five charges stemming from a demonstration organized by FUPI at the University of Puerto Rico in Sept., 1967. The demonstration was attacked by police, and a taxi driver was killed and four students wounded when the police opened fire on the students. In another case, the other 85 are charged with refusing induction into the U.S. Army.

Florencio Merced outlined the way U.S. imperialism exploits Puerto Rico economically and how the direct colonial relationship proves to be more lucrative for U.S. business interests than the more indirect neocolonial relationship U.S. imperialism maintains with other sectors of Latin America.

Short statements expressing solidarity with the 110 defendants were made by speakers from several organizations. Juan Santana of the Frente Unido de Liberación Dominicano related the repression now going on in Puerto Rico to the concurrent repression going on in the Dominican Republic.

THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

November 13, 1943

"Stock Market Plunges to 7 Month Low." "Armament Shares Lose 1 to 10 Points." "Early Peace Talk Is Blamed for

Selling Pressure."

These headlines on the financial pages this week tell more about the realities of this war than all the speeches gushing forth from Washington about "taking the profits out of war" and "equality of sacrifice." Big Business is piling up such enormous war profits that it fears the slightest slackening in the production of the instruments of death. The faintest rumor of peace sends shivers through the pocketbooks of the finance capitalists and starts the stock-market speculators unloading their shares.

Whenever something happens that threatens to bring closer the end of the imperialist conflict or to imperil the imperialist system itself, the stock-exchange, that most sensitive barometer of capitalist interests, gets depressed. When the Italian masses rose up last July and launched their revolutionary struggle for power and peace, the stock market went into a nosedive. No sooner was the Italian revolution temporarily checked than stocks began to rise again.

Despite the Moscow pact, the capitalists fear also the consequences for the Red Army victories.

Each time the Red Army beats back the Nazis, the stock market falls — and the faster and farther the Red Army travels toward the frontiers of capitalist Europe, the more tremors Wall Street feels.

Big Business evidently hasn't as much confidence in its future as is pretended in the advertisements of the big corporations about the "brave new world" ahead. The nervous behaviour of the stock market reflects its dread of all sharp changes in world conditions.

Above all, American Big Business fears every independent and revolutionary action of the working masses and every great victory of the workers. The capitalist masters know that the growing power of the working class means not only less profits to them but the prospective end of the entire profit system, its exploitation, its crises and its wars.

British troops out of Ireland

In response to the 24 killings in the past two weeks all working people should demand that the British troops get out of Ireland now. The occupation forces are engaged in a dirty war to defend the interests of the capitalists of London, Dublin, and Belfast. As part of that war they arm and give intelligence to the rightist street gangs of the Ulster Defence Association. The Royal Ulster Constabulary cops are the greatest source of violence.

In the tried and trusted methods of an old imperialist power, the big-business press in Britain describes the carnage in the streets of working-class neighborhoods of Northern Ireland as "tribal warfare." The implication is that the British government is needed to "civilize" the unruly natives. But the escalating murders of the last months are neither "tribal" nor an ancient religious conflict — any more than are the conflicts in South Africa, Somalia, or Yugoslavia. What's involved are modern social classes struggling to defend their interests.

The crisis stems from the long-term decline of British imperialism, its deep economic depression, and the stress of trying to compete with rival capitalist powers as the old world order comes apart. British and Northern Ireland employers are no longer able to deliver crumbs from their profits to workers in Northern Ireland who are Protestant in order to keep them tied to the ruling class in London and Belfast.

The largely Protestant Shankill Road district, where the Irish Republican Army (IRA) bomb exploded, was once a prosperous neighborhood of skilled engineering workers (machinists), many of whom had a secure future for themselves and their offspring at Shorts aerospace plant, Harland and Wolff shipyard, or the many engineering plants of Belfast.

Today, 31 percent of male workers are unemployed in the Shankill area. Even this high jobless rate is much lower than 62 percent unemployment in the largely Catholic Falls Road district, where systematic discrimination has meant some families have not had full-time jobs for generations.

Unionism, which means fighting to defend the union with Britain, has for 150 years been a life-and-death question for the capitalists of Belfast who made their money from linen and engineering and needed access to the markets of the empire. When the toilers of Ireland won their independence from British rule in the rising tide of struggles that followed the victory of the Russian workers and farmers in 1917, these capitalists demanded and won the partition of Ireland. In the process, they won some workers to their Unionist banner by providing privileges to a layer of Protestant workers.

Without a revolutionary working-class leadership the workers and farmers of Ireland were unable to win class unity. The nationalist leadership of Sinn Fein had no social

program to address the issues facing toilers that could unify the working class. In the south the representatives of the Irish bourgeoisie led by Michael Collins and Arthur Griffith succeeded in establishing a capitalist state.

Working people in Ireland and Britain today, whatever their religion or place of birth, need to wage a fight against the bosses and their system of capitalist exploitation, which exists in Dublin as in London and Belfast. The starting point must be to unify and mobilize working people to confront the economic and social problems they face. This is the road toward a united Ireland. The fight being waged by the African National Congress and Nelson Mandela in South Africa provides valuable lessons for those who want to end the grip of British colonialism in Northern Ireland.

The labor movement should champion demands to unify working people on both sides of the Irish Sea, beginning with demanding that British troops get out of Northern Ireland. Supporting positive (affirmative) action for Catholic workers, who have been discriminated against for decades, would go a long way toward building such unity.

Working people should also support talks on the status of Northern Ireland without exclusion of any parties or preconditions. Labor should demand repeal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, used in numerous frame-ups to limit the democratic rights of all workers. In addition, London should lift the absurd broadcasting ban that prohibits the voice of Sinn Fein leaders from being heard on British radio or television.

The bombing campaigns carried out by the IRA today are an obstacle in building such working-class unity. In Britain, these bombings treat workers as part of the problem and push them into the arms of the British rulers instead of fighting to win them to the cause of Irish self-determination.

The opportunities, however, to build a leadership that can unite working people to fight along these lines are greater today because of the breakup of the Stalinist parties and regimes in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, which had a chokehold on revolutionary movements for decades. In the name of communism, these parties corrupted young fighters seeking a revolutionary road. This has been the biggest obstacle in Ireland each time there was a rise in the struggle, from the class battles of the 1930s to the civil rights movement of the 1960s.

The ongoing struggle for Irish self-determination opens the door for young fighters to reach out and find working-class internationalism, instead of corruption and thuggery. It also places responsibility on fighters everywhere — and in Britain especially — for solidarity with Irish workers and farmers seeking to remove the boot of British colonialism from their necks.

Defend framed-up miners

The federal government, its police agencies, the West Virginia state cops, and the Arch Mineral Corp. are in the process of railroading eight coal miners to jail. A federal grand jury started to cook up the foul concoction against the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) members in August.

A defense campaign for the strikers led by the UMWA is urgently needed. This effort should be supported to the hilt by unionists, students, and all defenders of democratic rights. The frame-up indictments are directed against the entire union.

The charges come as the operators have stepped up their violent provocations against the miners' union, many of whose members have been on strike longer than ever before.

The coal bosses' lackeys, in and out of uniform, have fired gunshots at miners. Pickets have been run over. Judges have slapped the union with a stack of injunctions and outrageous fines. Operators are running struck mines with bosses. And

the Clinton administration, organizer of mass butchery from Somalia to Waco, Texas, backed an effort in the Supreme Court to fine the union \$52 million as vengeance for the miners' victory against Pittston Coal in 1990.

The federal jury's dirty work alleges the miners violated federal laws that prohibit interfering with transportation in interstate commerce. The use of this charge has historical precedent. It gets the federal government in on the anti-union assault.

In December 1987 four Kentucky miners were convicted and sentenced to long jail terms on frame-up charges of "conspiracy to damage and disable motor vehicles used in interstate commerce." The miners were leading activists in the strike against A. T. Massey Coal in the mid-1980s.

The entire labor movement has a stake in fighting alongside the UMWA to win the strike and end the frame-up. Labor should demand: Drop the trumped-up charges in West Virginia! Hands off the UMWA!

Clinton's 'health security' scam

"Security." That's what the Clintons claim their health plan will provide to working people in the United States. But this is a barefaced lie.

The "Health Security Act" does nothing whatsoever to advance medical care as a right to which all human beings are entitled. It does not make the quantum leap necessary from private to public insurance. This plan will not resolve the health crisis facing millions of working people either.

On the contrary, the Clinton administration has made clear that "there can't be any more free health care to which people feel they are entitled," as Hillary Clinton put it. The result will be to fatten the coffers of certain insurance companies.

President Bill Clinton's health care reform measures will make it harder for whole layers of the working class to receive decent medical treatment, further deepening divisions among working people. Undocumented immigrants, for example, will be denied access to medical insurance. Workers who are laid off or quit their jobs may be required by law to pay the full cost of continuing their policies — estimated at \$4,360 for a typical family. While providing a bonanza for many insurance companies, this will be a tremendous added financial burden to someone already out of a job.

Meanwhile, billions of dollars will be slashed from Medicare and Medicaid — real entitlement programs that provide some measure of health care to elderly, disabled, and low income people.

These programs were originally won by working people in 1965 under the pressure of the massive civil rights movement. Medicare was an extension of the Social Security Act, which was wrested from the government 30 years earlier after several years of struggle by trade unions and organizations of the unemployed.

Throughout the depression of the 1930s and the labor upsurge that followed World War II, the labor movement fought for expanding social programs for all working people — unemployment benefits, social security for the elderly and disabled, libraries and recreational facilities, and other social needs.

Working people need to defend and expand the social gains made over the past decades. Medical care should be a right from cradle to grave — an entitlement — for every human being, along with real social security for the unemployed, elderly, and disabled.

Was disciplining Jeffries a question of free speech?

In a letter reprinted on the next page, Jim Miller takes issue with the *Militant* regarding the decision by City College of New York (CCNY) to discipline professor Leonard Jeffries in March 1992. Miller raises several valid points on the differences between the racist oppression of Blacks under capitalism and Jeffries's pseudoscientific theories. But Miller and the column I wrote in the *Militant* September 20 make some of the same mistakes in supporting the right of the CCNY administration to discipline Jeffries for his ideas.

Jeffries was removed from his position as head of the Black Studies Department for being an "incompetent administrator" after months of controversy surrounding anti-Semitic comments he made during a speech in Albany in 1991. In May 1993 a federal jury concluded that the university had violated Jeffries's First Amendment rights and ordered he be paid \$400,000 in damages. The *Militant* has argued in several columns that Jeffries should have been disciplined.

It is "correct for workers and students to demand that

DISCUSSION WITH OUR READERS

professors who advocate Jew-hatred in the classroom be disciplined," I mistakenly stated in this column on September 20. "Teachers, professors, and school administrators at public schools and universities who use their positions to preach racist or anti-Semitic poison to students are not practicing 'freedom of speech.' "

But after looking at this case again, I am convinced this point of view needs to be corrected. The question of whether Jeffries should have been disciplined is primarily a free-speech question. Jeffries was not being accused of having committed anti-Semitic acts. There is no indication, for example, that he abused a Jewish student.

However, many of the points Jeffries argues — from his view that the actions of Jews are a primary cause of the racist oppression of Blacks to his argument that more skin melanin makes Blacks more intelligent and "humanistic" than whites — are dangerous and divisive for working people who are seeking solutions to social problems. They point away from the real source of racism, which is capitalism, and help deepen divisions among the working class.

The *Militant* has been correct in pointing out that the most important challenge for those who oppose Jeffries's views is to combat them politically. The important thing is to argue against what Jeffries says, not prevent him from explaining his views.

Allowing the university administration to silence Jeffries points in the opposite direction. It makes it harder to force an open debate where he can be confronted and politically defeated. It is especially absurd and condescending to imply that college students, adults by any standard, need to be "protected" from Jeffries and his ideas. Rather, it is young fighters on the college campuses and in the factories who will be in the best position to take Jeffries on.

Free speech must be defended

More importantly, we cannot rely on state institutions — in this case the administration of CCNY — to defend free speech. Several readers of the *Militant* have written to point this out. "Can university officials be relied upon" to determine which ideas or statements are racist or anti-Semitic? Gary Cohen asked in a letter printed in the *Militant* September 20. College officials, Cohen correctly pointed out, could "make a case for disallowing the writings of Malcolm X... in a class curriculum because of his alleged 'racist' views towards whites." Or construe anti-Zionist writings as anti-Semitic.

What was revealed in the May 1993 judicial ruling was that the court found it difficult to uphold the university's attack on Jeffries's right to free speech.

According to the ruling issued by District Judge Kenneth Conboy, the action taken by the university is "constitutionally impermissible." Conboy pointed out that accusing Jeffries of being an incompetent administrator was clearly a cover for a blatant attempt to remove him from his position because of statements — albeit "hateful, poisonous, and reprehensible statements" — he had made. The university had made no attempt, Conboy said, to show that Jeffries had "disrupted the campus, classes, administration, fund-raising, or faculty relations."

Racism is real problem on campus

Miller is correct to draw a distinction between racist discrimination against Blacks and Jeffries's pseudoscientific theories on melanin. While Jeffries's theories point opponents of racist discrimination in the wrong direction, they are not identical with the ideology that helps to shore up centuries of oppression against Blacks and that is an essential tool for the bosses in maintaining their rule.

One of the problems in demanding that CCNY discipline Jeffries is that it diverts attention away from the much bigger problem on most college campuses, which is discrimination against Blacks and other oppressed nationalities, not anti-Semitism. It is this fact that led to the witch-hunt against Jeffries, who had helped prepare a report condemning racism in the New York school system, in the first place.

—SARA LOBMAN

Mushroom workers vote down concession pact

This column is devoted to reporting the resistance by working people to the employers' assault on their living standards, working conditions, and unions.

We invite you to contribute short items to this column as a way for other fighting workers around the world to read about and learn from these important struggles. Jot down a few lines

imum wage pretty soon." □

Proposed retirement plan angers rail workers

Many rail workers are outraged at the recommendations from a task force led by Vice-president Al Gore to change the 60-year-old railroad retirement benefits system.

A report from the National Perfor-

there to show their support for the strike. The strikers used to be employed by SL before several lines were sold to SWEBUS. Passing SL buses were honking in support.

The strikers are protesting their treatment as new hires by the new owner. "It is not true that we are turning down the same wages as the other SWEBUS drivers," one woman said. "We are offered the lowest wages." □

Propane workers strike in three northeast states

More than 100 members of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) union struck Suburban Propane October 2. Workers walked out in Connecticut, New York, and Massachusetts. "Their whole purpose was to break the union. The offer they put on the table they knew we couldn't accept," said one striker in Derby, Connecticut. Suburban Propane demanded workers accept a \$2 hourly wage cut, a redefinition of overtime that would also cut pay, and the hiring of part-time workers while union members are laid off. The company also wants to end seniority guidelines for layoffs and impose arbitrary rules as obstacles to reaching full pay.

Suburban Propane is owned by the British company Hanson, which also owns Peabody Holding Co., whose mines are currently struck by the United Mine Workers of America. □

Review proposed eliminating the Railroad Retirement Board and folding pension payments into the Social Security administration. Although all the changes have not been spelled out, many believe it amounts to a significant reduction in retirement benefits, which rail workers have paid billions into, expecting a decent retirement package.

A statement issued by the United Transportation Union (UTU) pledges to "oppose the proposal in Congress with every means at our disposal."

"The government doesn't pay one dime into our retirement," said one conductor. "Why should they have any control over it?"

Others are disappointed that their hopes in the Clinton/Gore administration are already going sour. One young switchman told a shift change crowd, "We ought to all take off work one day and go down to the congressman's office, to demonstrate our opposition. No railroading that day, I bet that'll get their attention." □

Striking bus drivers demonstrate in Stockholm

Some 100 striking bus drivers took part in a one hour demonstration outside the office of SWEBUS in central Stockholm, Sweden, October 20. Another 20-30 drivers employed by the city-owned Storstockholms Lokaltrafik (SL) — Greater Stockholm Local Transport) were

Striking soda ash miners at General Chemical Co.'s mines and processing plants in southwest Wyoming recently toured Salt Lake City, Utah, to appeal for solidarity. They spoke to a number of workers about their fight. Members of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 15320 have been on the picket lines for more than three months.

"A lot is riding on our strike," said striker Dave Welch. "If they beat us it would take the heart out



Boston teachers shut down schools during one-day strike October 27. Above, union members and supporters rally at City Hall Plaza. Teachers, who have been without a contract since August 1992, struck to protest lack of progress in negotiations.

of organized labor in Wyoming."

On October 9, 150 pickets held a "stand-in" to block trucks from entering and leaving. In no time, the Highway Patrol was there roughing up strikers, including a woman who had just had bypass surgery and a striker who had lost one of his legs in a mining accident. They arrested a 62-year-old, wrestling him to the ground and proudly displayed his concealed weapon, a pocket knife. Armed scabs have also entered the plant.

FBI agents provocatively cruise across the picket line. One striker was arrested by the cops for "stalking" and released only after he could prove that he had "legiti-

mate" business on U.S. Route 80.

The strikers are appealing for solidarity from the labor movement. Funds and statements of support can be sent to USWA Local 15320, P.O. Box 1588, Green River, WY 82935. □

The following people contributed to this week's column: Steve Craine, member of USWA Local 6191 in Pittsburgh; Pat Hunt, member of UTU Local 1405 in St. Louis; Inge Hinnemo in Stockholm; Will Wilkin, member of International Association of Machinists Local 609 in New Haven, Connecticut; and David Salner, member of USWA Local 8319 in Salt Lake City.

ON THE PICKET LINE

about what is happening in your union, at your workplace or other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

Workers at Moonlight Mushrooms, Inc., voted 618-169 on October 15 to reject a concession contract in the face of the company's threat to shut down the huge mushroom farm.

The proposed contract would have cut wages, currently running from \$5.60 to \$9.70 an hour, by 50 cents. Dental insurance and pension plans would have been eliminated, and payments for medical insurance capped at \$140 per month. The company also proposed cuts in vacations, holidays, and weekend premium pay.

"I put in 20 years in there and made the company a lot of money," commented a woman leaving the day shift. "I won't take it no more!"

The farm, part of which is underground in a mined-out limestone mine with 135 miles of tunnels, is the largest mushroom grower in the United States, producing 50 million tons annually.

Marcello Biori, a 26-year veteran of the mushroom mine, said, "This is the worst contract we've ever been offered. They went through the whole contract and just went chop, chop, chop — dental gone, pensions gone. I don't think they're bluffing about closing down, but people just feel enough is enough. They've got us to the point where we'll be making min-

imum wage pretty soon." □

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civil rights, many Black fighters strayed into racist ideology. Malcolm X was no exception. But he overcame this weakness, shaking off all racial notions. In this change, Malcolm X took a giant step towards unifying all the fighting forces of the working people. Jeffries and others who promote melaninism are taking a giant step backwards, deepening racial divisions.

Theories of Black racial superiority should be criticized from a scientific standpoint, but their proponents should not be subjected to administrative discipline.

Great strides have been made in expunging overt white racist statements from the classroom, from textbooks and from all areas of public life. These gains must be preserved by continuing struggles. Black racist theories undermine the fight by mentally crippling the youth who should be learning how to move forward. At the same time, however, any tendency to equate Black racism with white racism also undermines the struggle because it puts the victim on the same footing with the criminal.

Jim Miller
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Revolution betrayed

Maybe you read Gus Hall in the *People's Weekly World* on Saturday July 31, calling for left unity. I agree, we do need a stronger front in unity.

I wrote and sent the enclosed brief to the "World This Week," asking for its publication. Maybe the *Militant* can publish this:

Sir, in reference to *Political Affairs* of August 1992 in Gus Hall's interview with the Tudeh Party of

Iran, the question was asked concerning the collapse of the Soviet Union.

I have had the answer to that question for over 20 years in my library, but in some indolent way I neglected to read it. Only after the collapse of the Soviet System (I will not say communist, for we know that it is only as nominal as democracy is here). However, after that, there arose many questions, so I had this book sent up here, *The Revolution*

Betrayed. The revolution was betrayed over 50 years ago. The new system was infected at its conception with the virus of opportunism — Stalin, etc. Gorbachev and Yeltsin were just the culmination of the infection. The answer that we were seeking for is right there in Trotsky's work.

We should not be ashamed to look back and admit our folly, instead of looking for the cause ahead. This book should be required reading for the future generation so that this mistake will never be repeated.

A prisoner
Attica, New York

Political analysis

I am writing this letter to inquire about getting a prisoners subscription to the *Militant*. It has been an impossible task trying to get a seri-

ous analysis about world politics without reading the *Militant*.

A prisoner
Chillicothe, Ohio

TV censorship

I was glad to see the *Militant* take up the Clinton administration's probe on TV censorship.

I think an error was made though in quoting favorably the October 22 editorial in the *New York Post*.

If you read the editorial ("Janet Reno's wrong channel") through to the end, its main beef with government censorship has little to do with civil liberties and lots to do with the "cultural war" carried out daily in its opinion columns by Patrick Buchanan and others.

For the *Post*, the real problem is that "lawmakers . . . won't address the deeper causes" of "the actual

violence in America."

The list of purported causes the *Post* offers is the standard fare of rightist demagogues: "erosion of . . . traditional values," "a criminal justice system tending toward leniency," "disintegration of American family life."

The answer, in this framing of the problem, is spelled out directly twice a week by Buchanan: more cops, more prisons, longer sentences, and fewer immigrants.

Michael Baumann
Jersey City, New Jersey

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.



LETTERS

Leonard Jeffries

In a response to a reader, Sara Lobman argued correctly, in my opinion, that Leonard Jeffries should have been administratively disciplined for preaching anti-Semitism in the classroom. Action of this nature would have been a defense of democratic gains that are in the interests of working people.

Later in the article she criticizes Jeffries for his racist theory that Blacks are superior to whites due to the greater concentration of melanin in their skin. But this theory, preposterous and inhuman as it is, is not grounds for academic disciplinary action. If she had made it clear that Jeffries should only have been disciplined for anti-Semitism, and not for promoting the crackpot melanin hypothesis, then I would have no complaint. But I think she tended to lump the two together. For example, she says, "teachers . . . who use their position to preach racist or anti-Semitic poison to students are not practicing 'freedom of speech.'" In this statement, she seems to equate Black racism with white racism.

In her article, she draws a parallel between Jeffries's Black racism and William Shockley's white racism without noting that the two forms of racism have an entirely different significance for the working class. While it is true, as she points out, that Black racism is disorienting to anyone seeking a course to fight against oppression, it should also be pointed out that the massive anti-racist struggle waged against the oppression of Blacks by whites has no "reverse racism" counterpart.

In the course of the struggle for

world politics without reading the *Militant*.

A prisoner
Chillicothe, Ohio

TV censorship

I was glad to see the *Militant* take up the Clinton administration's probe on TV censorship.

I think an error was made though in quoting favorably the October 22 editorial in the *New York Post*.

If you read the editorial ("Janet Reno's wrong channel") through to the end, its main beef with government censorship has little to do with civil liberties and lots to do with the "cultural war" carried out daily in its opinion columns by Patrick Buchanan and others.

For the *Post*, the real problem is that "lawmakers . . . won't address the deeper causes" of "the actual

Air France strike pushes back layoffs

BY NAT LONDON
AND JEAN-LOUIS SALFATI

PARIS — The successful strike by thousands of Air France workers dealt a serious blow to government-led efforts to restructure French industry through massive layoffs and cuts in wages. This occurs in the context of an economic crisis that has strained the traditional alliance between Paris and Bonn and has pitted the French government against Washington in a series of trade conflicts.

The French economy has been in decline since the second half of 1992. Unemployment jumped to 11.8 percent in September and is expected to exceed 12 percent by the end of the year. Automobile sales for the first nine months of this year declined 17 percent.

Signs of increased resistance by workers to cutbacks and layoffs have been multiplying since early September. Opposition to government measures finally erupted when thousands of Air France ground personnel seized the runways at Orly and Charles de Gaulle airports outside Paris in October. The strike later spread to airports in the south of France. Several days later, the government capitulated and announced it was withdrawing its plans to restructure the company. Air France president Bernard Attali, an associate of French president François Mitterand, resigned.

Air France is a state-run company employing 63,000 workers. On September 15 management had announced a "social plan" to restructure the company and eliminate its operating deficit by laying off 4,000 workers, cutting wage bonuses, and breaking up the company into smaller independent units with the perspective of selling it off to private capitalists.

The government wants to reduce labor costs at Air France by 31 percent within four years. Management had announced a wage freeze for 1993, and the reduction of wages and bonuses for shift work. Some workers saw their wages drop by as much as 2,000 francs out of a monthly salary of 7,000–8,000 francs (US\$1,190–1,360).

Many French newspapers referred to September 15 as "Black Wednesday." On that day, the government announced more than 15,000 job cuts at different state-owned companies, including 2,250 at the aerospace com-

pany Aérospatiale and 2,300 at GIAT Industries, a major arms manufacturer. Layoffs are taking place or being planned by many companies, in both the public and private sector, including at Chausson, Citroën, Peugeot, Bull, Michelin, and Renault.

The stated objective of the new conservative government of Edouard Balladur is to sell off nationalized enterprises. To accomplish this, Balladur is attempting to force through plans to restructure state-owned companies to make them more profitable for the capitalists before privatizing them.

The layoffs being announced one after the other have had a deep impact on workers and led to many discussions. Some unions are calling for a united response by the labor movement.

The first important reactions by workers were at the state-run railroad, the SNCF, where a wage freeze and reduction in the work force had been announced for 1993. Two days of strikes were held in which large numbers of workers participated. Tens of thousands of rail workers also joined an October 6 national demonstration.

This was the starting signal for a series of union actions in other industries. On October 12, two national union federations, Force Ouvrière (FO) and Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT), organized a national day of demonstrations and other protests across the country. In many cities the union marches were the largest workers' actions in many years. Another union federation, the Confédération Française Démocratique des Travailleurs (CFDT), held a separate national day of protest activities October 15.

At France Telecom, the state-run telephone company, 75 percent of the work force, including 30 percent of the white collar employees, participated in a one-day strike October 12.

The conservative daily *Le Figaro* noted October 26 that "following the big success of the strike October 12 at France Telecom, [Minister] Gérard Longuet was hesitant to transform the state-run concern into a regular corporation in which the state held 100 percent of the capital." Such an action would have been the first step on the road to the privatization of the telecommunications system.



Militant/Jean-Louis Salfati
Strikers mobilize at Orly Airport in Paris October 26 against layoffs and wage cuts at Air France. Protests forced French government to retreat from austerity measures.

The strike at Air France also began October 12. All the unions organizing ground personnel — CGT, CFDT, FO — supported the strike. Daily assemblies of workers voted each day on whether to continue the walkout.

Workers occupy runways

Workers occupied freight centers at the two Paris airports and welded the doors shut. Several planes were locked inside. On October 19 thousands of enraged workers occupied the runways at Charles de Gaulle. The next morning 3,000 strikers at Orly Airport followed their example. Air France canceled all flights from the two airports.

The next day strikers blocked the flights of other airlines as well. When the police occupied the runways, strikers blocked the highways near the airports. Then they blocked the roads leading to the airports

only to return once again to the runways. Daily demonstrations of thousands took place at Orly.

These actions were undertaken without any initiative by most union officials. They were voted on at the mass assemblies each morning. Some union representatives announced on the national radio network "France Info" that union officials had been bypassed by the workers and that they were no longer responsible for what happened. But most union officials followed the lead of the striking workers.

The government called in the CRS riot police to prevent the strikers from occupying the runways. This provoked numerous violent clashes as the cops attacked the strikers' demonstrations. In one incident, broadcast on national television, rampaging CRS troopers stormed through an airline terminal

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German workers resist austerity measures, job cuts

BY LÜKO WILLMS

BONN, Germany — More than 100,000 construction workers from all over Germany converged here October 28 to protest cuts in bad weather pay. Introduced in the former West Germany in 1959, bad weather pay allows workers in construction to get hourly unemployment benefits from November to March when inclement weather makes it impossible to work outdoors. This allows companies to keep employees on the payroll during those months and use workers whenever weather conditions permit. This is supplemented by a series of regulations in the union contract.

The action by construction workers came on the heels of resistance by other unionists to layoffs and government austerity measures.

A week before the Bonn march more than 10,000 steelworkers and miners took to the streets all over the Ruhr Valley protesting cuts in unemployment benefits, which soften the effects of plant closures. A group of workers shut down the A42 expressway for three-quarters of an hour.

On October 23, 4,000 workers and their supporters protested the announced closing of the Deutsche Aerospace (DASA) plant in Lemwerder near Bremen. The workers are now guarding the plant gate to prevent the transfer of machines and tools to other factories. DASA is a division of the Daimler-Benz trust, which has recently announced it will slash 13,000 jobs and close six plants.

The current governing coalition had



Militant/Lüko Willms
Some 100,000 construction workers rallied in Bonn October 28 to protest wage cuts.

threatened to eliminate bad weather pay completely by 1994. On October 22, as part of a larger package of cutbacks in social security, the Bundestag (parliament) majority had passed a law shortening the winter period for bad weather pay December–February, cutting it by one hour per day, and canceling it altogether by 1996.

The construction workers followed a

call by their union, the BSE, which chartered 30 trains and 1,600 buses to bring members and unorganized workers to Bonn. The Gardening, Agricultural, and Forestry Workers (GGLF), which plans to merge with the construction workers and whose members are also covered by bad weather pay, joined the action.

In Bonn, workers converged in feeder

marches from three gathering places to a central rally on the Hofgarten lawn in the center of the city. Bruno Kbele, the BSE chairman; Theo Willemsen, a construction worker from Wesel; Franz Mntefering, Social Democratic Party minister for social affairs of the North Rhine-Westfalia region; Wilma Moll, a worker's wife from Gießen; and Hans-Joachim Wilms, the GGLF chairman, addressed the rally.

Kbele assailed the Kohl government's course, which includes cuts in holiday pay, unemployment benefits, social welfare programs, and public housing.

The complete elimination of bad weather pay is an additional punishment for construction workers who are affected by seasonal work and joblessness during winter months, the BSE chairman said. Government proposals will lead to shorter vacations, smaller pensions, and the breakdown of collective contracts in construction, roofing, scaffolding, gardening, and landscape gardening, he said.

The union leader also criticized contracts for East European construction companies, which employ their own workers in Germany at much lower wages. Eastern European colleagues are used as modern day wage slaves, he added.

Kbele called on the Bundesrat, the body representing the federal states, to reject the parliament's decision. He called upon workers to vote only for candidates supporting bad weather pay in the many elections coming up next year.